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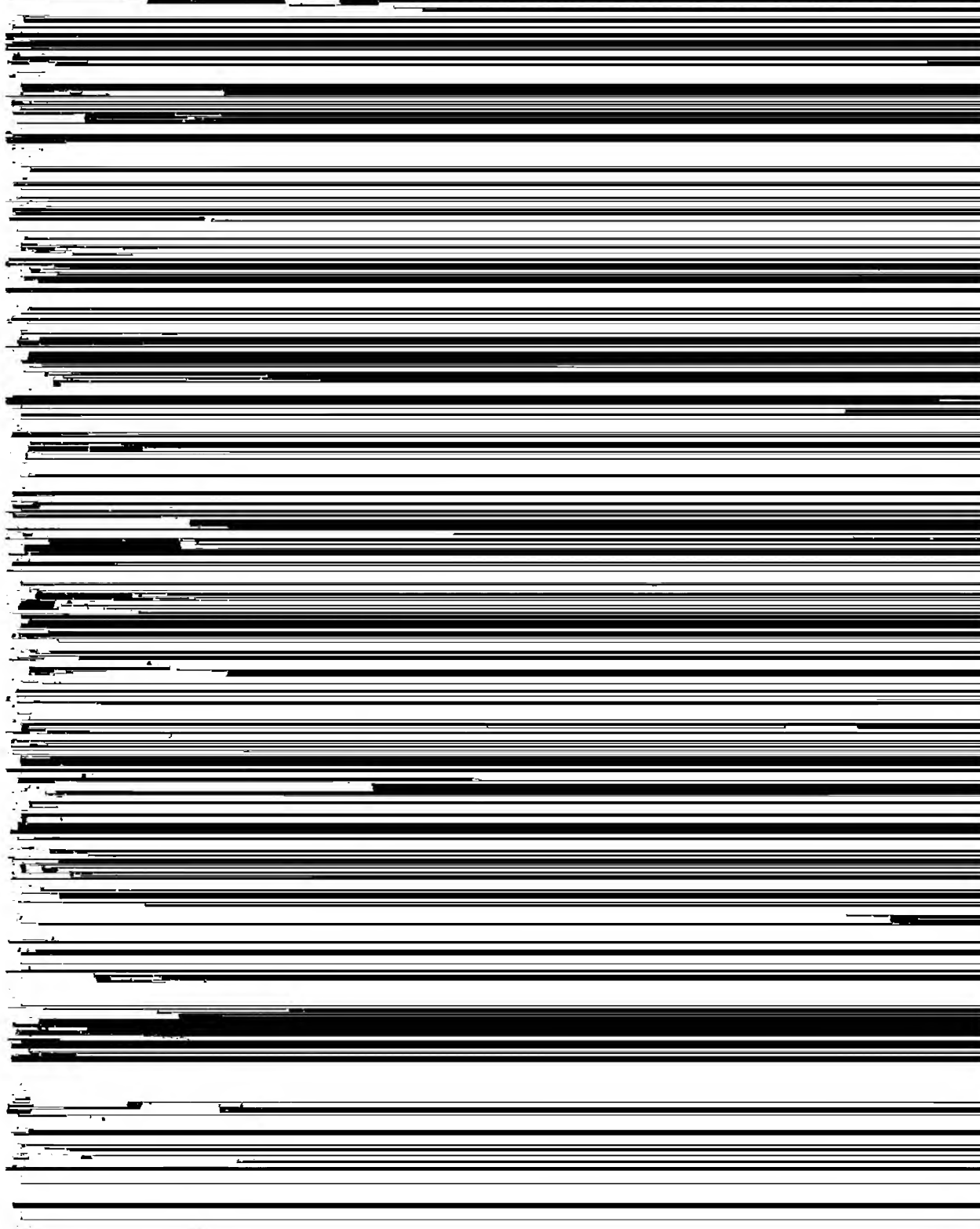
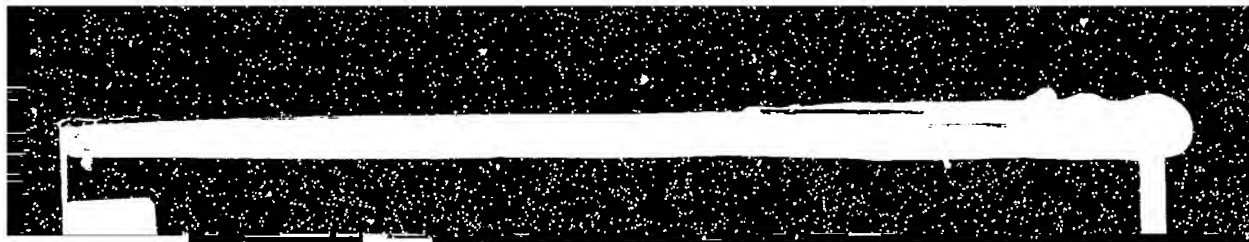
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## ABSTRACT

As a society, the United States is becoming increasingly concerned with the far-reaching consequences of childhood aggression and youth violence. This book offers a way in which educators can talk to K-12 students about violence. The step-by-step approach enables students to talk about experiences with anger, violence, threats, loss of control, regaining control, and the effects of witnessing violence. The session plans are broken down into three areas for easy reference: Primary, Junior/Intermediate, and Secondary. The session plans themselves are grouped into theme areas--each theme area includes 3-5 session plans. A standard format is used throughout for easy implementation. Each session plan takes approximately 40 minutes to complete. A brief literature review is included which offers a definition of interpersonal violence and which explores individual, social, and environmental factors that may influence a person's violence potential. The program outlined here is a transformational model and aims to help students and teachers not feel overwhelmed by problems of violence. Discussion, art, films, and role playing activities are all utilized. Evaluations of the program and a presentation directed at parents are provided. Contains approximately 100 references. (RJM)

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# *Violence Prevention*

## *A Group Discussion Approach*

John Allan

Judith Nairne

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**GUIDANCE CENTRE**  
The Ontario Institute  
for Studies in Education of the  
University of Toronto



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# Contents

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Acknowledgments vi

Preface vii

I Introduction 1

II Violence and Violence Prevention: A Review of the Literature 3

Definition of Violence 3

A Developmental Perspective 3

Influencing Factors 4

Theories 10

Intervention 12

Implications of Research Findings 17

III The Class Discussion Technique 20

IV The Themes and Session Plan Implementation 24

V The Programme Evaluation 28

VI The Session Plans 31

## **Primary Level 31**

### **Feelings**

Session 1: Your Feelings 33

Session 2: Sadness 34

Session 3: Fear 35

Session 4: Happiness 36

Session 5: Others' Feelings — Empathy 37

Suggested Role-Plays 38

### **Solving Problems with Classmates**

Session 1: Anger 40

Session 2: Frustration 42

Session 3: How to Solve a Problem (S.T.A.R.) 43

Session 4: Expressing Anger 44

Session 5: Name Calling, Teasing and Put Downs 45

Session 6: Fighting 46

Suggested Role-Plays/Problems 47

### Getting Along with Classmates

- Session 1: Making Friends 50
- Session 2: Joining In and Playing a Game 51
- Session 3: Taking Turns and Sharing 52
- Session 4: Asking a Favour and Showing Affection 53
- Session 5: Keeping Friends and Apologizing 54
- Suggested Role-Plays 55

### Heroes

- Session 1: Media Heroes 58
- Session 2: Real Heroes 60
- Session 3: I Can Be a Hero 61

### Big Book Activities 62

## Junior/Intermediate Level 65

### Emotions

- Session 1: Your Feelings 67
- Session 2: Recognizing Others' Feelings 69
- Session 3: Empathy --- Responding to Others' Feelings 70
- Session 4: We Are All the Same Inside 72

### Managing Anger

- Session 1: Anger 74
- Session 2: Calming Down and Thinking 75
- Session 3: Expressing Anger 77
- Session 4: Practising the Steps 79
- Suggested S.T.A.R. Steps and Role-Plays/Situations 80

### Problem Solving

- Session 1: Frustration 83
- Session 2: Put Downs 84
- Session 3: Accepting Criticism 85
- Session 4: Peer Pressure 87
- Suggested Role-Plays/Situations 89

### The Media and Violence

- Session 1: The Media 92
- Session 2: Media Heroes 94
- Session 3: Personal Heroes 95
- Session 4: Violence 96

### Journal Activities 97

**Senior Level 101**

**The Problem**

- Session 1: Violence 103
- Session 2: The Dynamics of Violence 105

**Empathy: Understanding and Communicating Emotions**

- Session 1: Knowing and Expressing Your Feelings 107
- Session 2: Recognizing and Showing Understanding of Another's Feelings 108
- Session 3: Communicating Empathy 109
- Session 4: Stereotyping, Labelling and Prejudice 110
- Suggested Role-Plays 111

**Anger Control**

- Session 1: Exploring Anger 113
- Session 2: Understanding Anger 114
- Session 3: Managing Anger 115
- Session 4: Anger Control Summary 116
- Diagram, Steps for Controlling Anger and Suggested Role-Plays 117

**Problem Solving and Solutions to Specific Problems**

- Session 1: The Steps 121
- Session 2: Finding Solutions 122
- Session 3: Assertiveness 123
- Session 4: Peer Pressure 125
- Session 5: Gang Pressure 126
- Session 6: Bullying 127
- Session 7: Avoiding a Fight 128
- S.T.A.R. Steps and Suggested Role-Plays 129

**Student Evaluation 135**

**Keepsake Journal Record 137**

**VII Parent Presentation: Media Violence and Children 141**

**References 148**

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## Preface

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We are extremely pleased to participate in this collaborative book venture with the Guidance Centre. *Violence Prevention: A Group Discussion Approach* by John Allan, Judith Nairne and Jo-Ann Majcher, is a very well written monograph that responds to a critical problem of epidemic proportions facing schools, school staff and especially school students. The authors' approach to violence prevention is a reasoned and highly practical one. It draws upon the authors' own experiences as well as the voluminous literature on the subject. Counselors, teachers, therapists and other school specialists will find in this volume the practical approaches and programs which will enable them to successfully respond to school violence. The authors' group discussion approach is well suited to the school setting. By reading this monograph and utilizing the approaches and interventions which are described in detail, counselors and other school personnel will be able to immediately begin contributing to a reduction in school violence in the school in which they work.

ERIC/CASS and the Guidance Centre have successfully collaborated on book sales and other projects for many years. This, our first joint publication arrangement, is an exciting venture for us. We are most appreciative of the Guidance Centre's invitation to join with them and are hopeful that it is a harbinger of many future collaborations to come. By combining our resources and talents in responding to issues which are truly "borderless," we more effectively empower counselors and other school personnel in both countries than if we were each to go it alone!

Garry R. Walz, Director  
ERIC/CASS  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

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# I Introduction

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As a society we are becoming increasingly concerned with the far reaching consequences of childhood aggression and youth violence. There is an expanding awareness that early childhood aggression can have a negative impact on the development of an individual. Research in this area clearly links social adjustment and later life difficulties, especially that of adult violent behaviour. Preventing violence must begin early in children's development when they are learning how to deal with the conflicts in their lives.

The American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth (1993) delivered a clear message of hope regarding youth violence; as a concerned society we can reduce and prevent the involvement of children and youth in violent behaviour as it is "not random, uncontrollable, or inevitable." It goes on to say that "violence is learned, and it can be unlearned" (p. 5). The commission charged the stakeholders of society to continue to research, develop, implement and evaluate intervention programs that will address the issue of violence and youth.

In order to plan effective programs, educators must first understand that violence is a complex, multifaceted problem that has no quick nor easy solutions. To effectively deal with the problems one soon recognizes the need for multi-disciplinary action; for example researchers, public health officials, government, law enforcement authorities, educators and parents need to work together across the many levels of society (e.g. social, individual, biological). When dealing with the prevention and elimination of violence there are many points at which intervention can be planned and implemented. Teachers and counsellors have the opportunity to take a preventative approach to addressing the issue of youth violence. Because most children attend school we have a built-in opportunity to influence their attitudes and behaviours regarding violence. Drawing on the research, knowledge, expertise and experience of professionals in other disciplines we can systematically plan, implement and evaluate violence prevention programs that target children's beliefs and behaviours about violence.

Teachers and counsellors need to educate themselves about the roots of violence; we need to understand how the cycle of violence is perpetuated and why particular violence prevention strategies that we employ in the classroom are chosen. A working knowledge of the many risk factors involved allows violence intervention strategies to be planned and implemented in meaningful and purposeful ways. In Chapter II we will provide a brief review of the literature that will offer a definition of interpersonal violence and will discuss individual, social and environmental factors that may influence a person's violence potential. This chapter will also present theories that are useful in conceptualizing the issues of behaviour and change, present promising components of intervention programs and end with the implications of these research findings on the design of a violence prevention program for the schools. Chapter III will describe the class discussion technique which is utilized extensively throughout this program. Chapter IV will present an overview of the themes in the book along with suggestions for session plan implementation. Chapter V will discuss the results of our program evaluation and Chapter VI will include all of the session plans as well as suggested in-session and follow-up activities.

Our task was to design a violence prevention program that could be used by teachers and counsellors with students from kindergarten to grade twelve. This book focuses on using a class discussion approach that helps students to proactively examine and deal with the many faces of violence that they encounter.

We are not presenting any quick-fix solutions. There are none. Rather we are offering the opportunity to use the materials within this book for working with students to challenge beliefs that violence is a normal way to express anger, exert control and solve problems. As an educator, and because school is the one common environment that is experienced by almost all children, you are in a unique position to influence children's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in a positive way.

## II Violence and Violence Prevention: A Review of the Literature

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This chapter contains a definition of violence, a developmental perspective on how people become violent and a description of the many factors that may influence the development of aggressive and violent behaviour. As well, it highlights pertinent theories, describes interventions and then summarizes the research findings which underlie and support our group discussion approach to violence prevention.

### Definition of Violence

The National Research Council defines interpersonal violence as "behaviour by persons against persons that intentionally threatens, attempts, or actually inflicts physical harm" (Reiss & Roth, 1993, p. 35). The behaviours that are described in this definition are also found in definitions of aggression and most of what is understood about violence comes from research done on aggression (Reiss & Roth, 1993). It has been shown that in many instances childhood aggression can be linked to future violent behaviour. Aggression shows substantial stability over time (Olweus, 1984). Children who are aggressive tend to grow up to be violent adolescents and violent adults. Children at around age eight who show aggressive behaviour are more likely than their peers to demonstrate delinquent, criminal or violent behaviour in adolescence and adulthood (Olweus, 1979; Farrington, 1989, 1991). Farrington (1991) found that boys who were rated by teachers as being aggressive at ages 8-10 and 12-14 tended to report more convictions for violence and violent behaviour as adults. The differences that separate aggressive children who grow up to commit violent behaviours from those who do not are not well known. What is known is that the greatest predictor of future violent behaviour is a previous history of violence. It is, therefore, imperative for educators to plan and implement programs that focus on decreasing aggressive behaviour in children and youth.

### A Developmental Perspective

Violence is a complex multidimensional behaviour. There is no one factor operating in isolation that can predict exactly which individuals will become violent. It is the interaction of many factors that influences the development and stability of aggressive and violent behaviour patterns. For a person to commit a violent act there needs to be an interface between a person's violence potential and the immediate social environment in which they find themselves (Reiss & Roth, 1993).

To understand a child's potential for violent behaviour it is important to take into account the many individual and social factors that may interact within a child's environment to influence his/her potential for violence. Research done in this area suggests that individual factors, close interpersonal relations, (e.g., with family and friends), proximal social contexts (e.g., school and neighbourhood) and societal macrosystems all need to be considered (Tolan & Guerra, 1994). It is difficult to separate out the specific roles that various factors may play. It is, however, useful to recognize these many influences when planning intervention strategies.



### **Influencing Factors**

The following section provides a brief overview of many of the factors that may influence violent behaviour. For a more detailed examination of the literature the reader is directed to two comprehensive sources that provide an in-depth review of the violence literature. The first one, *Understanding and Preventing Violence* (Reiss & Roth, 1993) comes from the National Research Council, and the second one: *Reason to Hope: A psychosocial perspective on violence & youth* (Eron et al., 1994) arises out of the American Psychological Association's Commission on Violence and Youth. Both sources were used extensively to create this overview.

### **Biological Factors**

There are biological factors that may interact with social factors to increase the risk of a child developing aggressive and violent behaviour. These include both inherited and acquired biological factors. Inherited biological factors include temperament, activity levels and hormonal levels. Acquired biological factors include: pregnancy and birth complications such as birth trauma, low birth weight and other prenatal complications, head injuries; and exposure to lead and other toxins.

### **Temperament**

Early temperament may be a factor in the development of a child's potential for future violence. Information that supports the relationship between temperament and aggression is reported in the National Research Council's (Reiss & Roth, 1993) report. Children who exhibit a fearless, uninhibited temperament or a difficult temperament (those that are difficult to comfort as infants and who display temper tantrums during childhood) are at risk for future violent behaviour. It is possible that a fearless temperament may interact with a difficult temperament and other factors to increase the likelihood of later aggressive and violent behaviour (Reiss & Roth, 1993; American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

### **Gender**

The gender of a child may play a role in an individual's potential towards violent behaviour. The literature suggests that the development of violent potential may be different for men and women. It is important to point out that the research on gender differences regarding the development of aggression is limited because the majority of studies that examine childhood aggression have been carried out on boys, the assumption in the past being that aggression is primarily a male characteristic. Women commit very few violent crimes in comparison to their male counterparts. Very little research has been done regarding women who commit violent crimes. It is not clear whether the differences in aggressive behaviour between boys and girls is related to biological gender differences or to the sex role socialization regarding appropriate behaviour. To understand gender differences in aggression, both biological differences and psychosocial factors need to be considered.

### **Intelligence Quotient (IQ)**

Low IQ scores may interact with other factors to influence a child's potential for violence. Huesmann and Eron (1984) suggest that IQ may not be an independent variable in the prediction of aggression. In their research they found that IQ was no

longer a significant predictor of aggression at age 30 when the effects of aggression at age 8 were removed. They propose that low IQ in early childhood contributes to the adoption of aggressive behaviour and that once this aggressive behaviour pattern is well established IQ is not a factor in the development of further adult violent behaviour. It is possible that aggressive behaviour contributes to academic failure (Huesmann, Eron & Yarnel, 1987) which in turn contributes to later delinquency (Patterson, DeBaryshe & Ramsey, 1989).

### *Emotional and Cognitive Development*

Research indicates that a person with poor impulse or emotional control will only be at risk for violence if their preferred learned responses to situations are violent in nature (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

A child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may have cognitive deficits that contribute to the development of violent behaviour (Pepler & Slaby, 1994). Research indicates that children with ADHD may experience difficulties not only in academic areas but also in their ability to learn prosocial skills and moral concepts (Loeber, 1990). It appears that when ADHD co-exists with conduct problems in the early years of a child's life the risk of developing later delinquent behaviour increases (Farrington, Loeber & Van Kammen, 1990).

Hyperactivity, impulsivity and attention problems feature prominently in the childhood profiles of violent adult offenders (Farrington, 1989, 1991). As children they tend to be restless, lack concentration and engage in daring and risk taking behaviours (Farrington, 1991).

### *Family Factors*

There are a number of "family characteristics and a breakdown of family processes and relationships that contribute to the development of antisocial behaviours, including violence" (American Psychological Association on Violence and Youth, 1993, p. 18). A lack of parental supervision (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986), parental rejection and parent-child involvement have been identified as powerful predictors of delinquency (Eron, Walder & Lefkowitz, 1971; Farrington, 1991; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986; Olweus, 1980). The socioeconomic status of the family, the criminal history or antisocial personality of a parent, inconsistent parenting, harsh physical discipline and parental rejection also seem to influence a child's disposition towards aggression (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

When parents passively or actively support their children's aggressive behaviour they fail to teach their children nonviolent, prosocial ways of solving interpersonal problems. Patterson (1982) found that families of aggressive children support the use of aversive and aggressive behaviours in their children. They unintentionally reinforce aggressive behaviour and fail to reinforce prosocial behaviour, thereby reinforcing a pattern of negative interaction. It has also been suggested that children are not simply victims in this process but may also be the instigator of the aggressive interactions (Cairns, Cairns, Neckerman, Giesl & Gariepy, 1988; Hall & Cairns, 1984; Patterson, 1982).

When parents choose to use harsh physical punishment as the preferred way of disciplining their children it produces obedience in children in the short term. However, it also reinforces aggression and violent behaviour emerges as the behaviour of choice in children, adolescents and adults both inside and outside of the family (Straus, 1991) thus perpetuating the cycle of violence through aggressive and violent modelling. e.g. Dodge, Bates and Pettit (1991) found that harsh physical punishment in early childhood has shown to be related to children's aggression towards their peers, more so than any co-existing family ecological factors, child health or temperament. They argue that harsh parental punishment negatively impacts on the way in which children learn to think and solve problems and that this leads to the development of aggressive behaviour patterns.

### *School Factors*

Young children who are aggressive and disruptive in the classroom are at risk for academic failure, poor peer relations and later antisocial behaviour. It appears that the aggressive behaviour that children learn within their family and their community interferes with learning and with developing positive social relationships at school. Academic failure and poor peer relations contribute to later antisocial behaviour (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

Literature that focuses on childhood aggressive behaviour and peer interaction provides some interesting findings. Coie, Underwood and Lochman (1991) suggest that aggressiveness is the single most important reason for a child to be rejected and that the percentage of rejected children who are highly aggressive ranges between 30% to 40%. There is strong evidence for the link between aggression and rejection (Coie, Dodge & Kupersmidt, 1990; Huesmann & Eron, 1986), however, it is not clear whether being rejected by peers causes aggressive behaviour or whether aggressive behaviour causes social rejection or both. If aggression causes peer rejection then intervention strategies should focus on decreasing the aggressive behaviour of the child. If it is rejection by peers that causes aggression then interventions must target improving children's social relations to decrease aggressive behaviour.

Bullying and victimization among school children is a common phenomena. Research findings show that most bullies are boys, that young children are the most likely victims, that parents and teachers are often unaware of a problem and that the perception of children is that teachers do not intervene (MacDougall, 1993). Research suggests that bullying can be considered part of a more general antisocial and rule-breaking behaviour pattern. Predictions that school children who are aggressive and bully others are at a high risk for later problem behaviours such as criminality and alcohol abuse have been supported (Olweus, 1991).

Olweus (1991) has identified 4 factors that were particularly important in the development of bullying behaviours: (a) negative emotional attitude of primary caretaker(s) in early years, characterized by lack of warmth and involvement, (b) permissiveness for aggressive behaviour by the child, where the caretaker is permissive and sets no clear boundaries regarding aggressive behaviour, (c) power-assertive child-rearing methods i.e., physical punishment and violent emotional outbursts, (d) temperament of the child, active and hot-headed temperament being more likely to develop aggressive behaviour patterns.

In reviewing the literature regarding the causes of bullying and victimization among children Zeigler and Rosenstein-Manner (1991) found that there are many school and family factors that influence bullying. School factors identified that encouraged bullying were: low supervision during recess, lack of response by students not participating in the bullying, no clear rules regarding aggression, low principal involvement, poor communication between teaching staff and principal and the absence of student and teacher involvement in decision making. Family factors included: lack of parental warmth and involvement, absence of limit setting around aggressive behaviour, inconsistent and harsh punishment and the child's personality.

It has been suggested that the school setting itself may foster aggressive and violent behaviour. The National Research Council report (Reiss & Roth, 1993) suggests four characteristics that may contribute to violence: "(a) relatively high numbers of individuals occupy a limited amount of space, (b) the capacity to avoid confrontations is somewhat reduced, (c) the imposition of behavioural routines and conformity may contribute to feelings of anger, resentment, and rejection, and (d) poor design features may facilitate the commission of violent acts" (p. 370).

### *Social and Cultural Factors*

It is believed that social and cultural factors in early childhood have an influence on a person's lifelong attitudes, beliefs and behaviours towards violence because behaviour patterns learned early in life form the basis for violent behaviour later in life (Pepler & Slaby, 1994).

At the societal level our attitudes regarding violence are often ambivalent. Children receive mixed messages about what is appropriate behaviour and what is not. Prejudice and discrimination against certain populations within our society puts those individuals at increased risk for violence.

Poverty and socioeconomic inequality contribute to the propensity of violence. It is not surprising that violence is most prevalent amongst the poor as they know that they lack the basic necessities of life and the opportunities to improve their circumstances. Unemployment and poverty undermine family stability. The instability of low socioeconomic neighbourhoods also interacts with poverty to increase the potential for violence (American Psychological Association on Violence and Youth, 1993).

Research in the area of media violence strongly supports the notion that the potential for violence can be socially learned and transmitted (Eron & Slaby, 1994). There is consensus amongst most researchers that exposure to media violence promotes aggressive attitudes and behaviours in children (Heath, Bresolin & Rinaldi, 1989; Huesmann & Eron, 1986) on a short term and long term basis (Reiss & Roth, 1993). For a child who is already showing aggressive behaviours, being exposed to media violence may reinforce the aggressive behaviour (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). Prolonged viewing can lead to the fear of victimization, emotional desensitization and behavioural apathy as well as increasing a person's desire to become involved with violence (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). The media exacerbates the violence experienced by women and ethnic minorities by casting women in victim roles and minorities in aggressive and violent roles. Sexual attitudes about rape and violence towards women and the concept of reality of how

others live also becomes contorted (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

Access to firearms and other weapons makes the consequences of youth violence more lethal. Alcohol and other drugs can also play a large role in the promotion of violence as they can contribute directly to violent behaviour by lowering social inhibitions or indirectly because of the criminal nature of drug trafficking (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

Gangs are a place where youth can meet their psychosocial needs of belonging, connection and self-definition (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). Youth who join gangs are seeking what all adolescents strive to achieve: friendship, pride, identity, enhanced self-esteem, excitement, acquisition of resources and family and community tradition (Goldstein & Soriano, 1994). It has also been suggested that participation in mobs can also serve many needs. Motivation for participating in mob violence might include frustration, hostility, anger and the desire to hurt; the desire for social and institutional changes that are motivated partly by self-interest and partly in response to perceived injustice; feelings of connection and unity with others; a sense of identity; feelings of control, power and excitement that evolve from participating in group experiences; or the desire for personal gain (Staub & Rosenthal, 1994).

The unique cultures of ethnic minority groups play an important role in determining individual behaviour. Cultural norms influence behaviour and shape the identity of the group (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). Exposure to cultural influences in early childhood can have both positive and negative effects on a child's potential towards violent behaviour. A positive ethnic identity and sense of belonging to a group with shared values and traditions may help to buffer the child from aggressive and violent behaviour. On the other hand a child might be exposed to cultural norms that reduce inhibitions against violence; for example, degradation of women and alienation of some ethnic minorities (Reiss & Roth, 1993).

Many individuals who belong to an ethnic minority must negotiate three cultural realms: that of their indigenous ethnic culture with all the cultural values they bring from their country of origin, the minority realm, which relates to their minority ethnic status; and finally with the mainstream culture (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). Negotiating one's way through these realms is a complex process. Depending on social circumstances culture may or may not provide positive protective mechanisms for the individual. When there are limited opportunities for an ethnic minority youth to participate in mainstream culture the individual's potential for violence increases (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

### *Life Transitions*

It is possible that life transitions such as puberty, moving homes or schools, graduating, dropping out, starting a job, being unemployed, getting married or having a child may change a person's potential towards violent behaviour (Reiss & Roth, 1993). When looking at adolescent behaviour it is important to recognize the interaction between physiological growth, psychological development and changes in educational settings (e.g., transition from elementary to high school) as these will

affect an individual's potential for violence (Reiss & Roth, 1993).

Early maturation is often thought to be an advantage to boys and a disadvantage to girls (Reiss & Roth, 1993). Magnusson, Stattin and Allen (1986) found that girls with earlier menarche committed more antisocial acts than their slower developing peers as a result of having older friends.

Olweus (1987) has found that for boys there is a relationship between the increase of testosterone during puberty and an increased propensity towards aggressive behaviour. It has been suggested that the hormonal levels are probably related to the frequency or intensity of aggression rather than the cause of aggressive behaviour because this usually begins in childhood (Reiss & Roth, 1993).

### *Protective Factors*

Protective factors interact with risk factors at individual, social and environmental levels to determine a person's potential for violence. Two types of protective factors have been defined. The first type of protective factor is considered to be at the opposite end of the continuum of a risk factor and the second type of protective factor is thought to interact with a risk factor to minimize the effect of a risk factor (Farrington, Gallagher, Morley, Leger & West, 1988).

Research has been done with regards to factors that protect children who are at risk for offending and who do not become offenders. Rutter and Giller (1983) suggest that certain life transitions such as changes in peer groups, leaving school to be employed, moving away and marriage may be important factors related to decreasing delinquency and crime. It has been suggested that shyness, nervousness and social isolation inhibit aggressive behaviour in non-aggressive boys (Farrington et al., 1988). Other researchers, however, have found that a child who is aggressive and shy is more likely to be involved in later antisocial behaviour such as substance abuse (Kellam, Brown, Rubin & Enslinger, 1983) than an aggressive child who is not shy.

Werner and Smith (1992) in their longitudinal study identified a number of individual characteristics and sources of support that act as protective factors that insulate against violence. These include: having a temperament that elicits positive social responses from others, problem-solving skills, high self-esteem, internal locus of control, competent caregivers and caring adults besides parents, household rules and structure during adolescence and "second chance" opportunities at life transition points.

Young children who are exposed to cultural influences may build a positive ethnic identity and sense of belonging to a group where shared traditions and values may help to buffer the child against social risk factors that influence violent behaviour (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth 1993; Eron et al., 1994). The negative effects of media violence can be mediated through regulation and education (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993; Eron, et al., 1994).

### *Victims of Violence*

The fear of violence threatens all children and youth. Children can often be the unintended victims of violence because of the environment in which they live. It is important to realize that interpersonal violence, which occurs



most frequently and most violently, is between people who are somehow connected with each other. The relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is often a complicated and difficult issue.

There are vulnerable populations within our society who are at risk for being the victims of violence. These populations include children and youth of ethnic minorities, girls and young women, gays and lesbians and disabled children and adolescents.

For most ethnic minority youth, unless it is hate crime related, their ethnicity is not a risk factor involved in developing a potential for violence, rather it is the socio-cultural context in which they live that puts them at risk (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

Both boys and girls are victims of homicide and child physical and sexual abuse; however, girls and young women are especially at risk for childhood sexual abuse and dating violence (Sorenson & Bowie, 1994). The consequences of sexual violence can have both short term and long lasting effects on the individual (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

Youth who are gay and lesbian are at risk for being victims of violence. At the interpersonal level when they reveal their sexual identities they expose themselves to being vandalized, harassed, threatened, assaulted and murdered. At the individual level they are at greater risk of self inflicted violence (suicide) as they struggle with revealing their sexual orientation (D'Augelli & Dark, 1994).

Children with physical or mental disabilities are at risk for physical and sexual violence (Levey & Lagos, 1994). The very nature of their disabilities make them vulnerable as they are dependent on their caretakers for their life and this makes them reluctant to report abuse. They may be unable to defend themselves or to cry out for help, they may not be able to understand the difference between inappropriate and appropriate interaction and they are less likely to be believed when they do report abuse. Other factors associated with the mistreatment of disabled children relate to parents such as single-parent status, fewer years of education, chronic unemployment, low socioeconomic status, psychopathology, poor parenting skills and poor social interactive skills (Levey & Lagos, 1994).

It is clear that there are many factors that interact to place a child at risk for aggressive and violent behaviour. It is also clear that many of these factors can be acted upon to reduce the risk level for developing a violent personality. Within the education realm it is important for teachers to take a proactive and preventative approach to help protect children and youth from the risk of developing aggressive and violent behaviour.

## Theories

Over time many theories which describe and explain aggression and violence have evolved. Early instinct and drive theories have been helpful in developing the concepts of aggressive behaviour. More recent theories such as the social learning theory, social-cognitive theories and other developmental theories that look at long-term continuity and change regarding aggressive and violent behaviour have provided information about the acquisition, development and maintenance of aggressive behaviour, as well as how to control aggression (Pepler & Slaby, 1994). A comprehensive review of

aggression related theories can be found elsewhere (Reiss & Roth, 1993; Eron et al., 1994).

Two key theoretical areas that are helpful both in understanding how the potential for aggression and violence develops in a person and how interventions should be planned and implemented are social learning theory and social-cognitive theories. Both social learning and social-cognitive theories have made important contributions to understanding how interpersonal violence can be reduced or prevented. These theories should be seen as complimentary and viewed within the developmental framework already presented.

### *Social Learning Theory*

Social learning theory suggests that aggressive and violent behaviours are learned and sustained through environmental experiences and that aggressive behaviour can be learned responses to frustration or learned ways of achieving goals (Bandura, 1973). According to social learning theory, aggression can be learned vicariously by observing aggressive behaviour being modelled; through direct experience where the individual has received positive or negative reinforcement for aggression; and through an individual's own cognitive processes that guide and regulate behaviour (Bandura & Walters, 1959; Bandura, 1973, 1983).

### *Social-Cognitive Theories*

There is no one integrated social-cognitive theory, rather there are a number of models that share a common set of principles (Pepler & Slaby, 1994). Pepler and Slaby (1994) in reviewing these models found that they focus on the many ways that cognitive factors are related to aggression. These "cognitive factors are hypothesized to (a) be acquired through learning and development; (b) contribute to an individual's own proactive exposure to and interpretation of social experiences that foster aggression; (c) mediate an individual's aggressive response to particular social experiences; (d) account for individual continuities and consistencies in patterns of aggression, victimization and bystander support for violence; and (e) be amenable to change in ways that prevent or reduce aggression" (Pepler & Slaby, 1994, p. 31).

A cognitive-script model developed by Huesmann and Eron (1989) suggests that aggressive behaviour is controlled by "scripts" that are learned in early childhood. These scripts act as behavioural guides for the individual regarding what is about to happen, how the person will react and what the outcome will be. According to this model a child who repeatedly behaves in an aggressive manner is consistently retrieving and using aggressive scripts. These scripts remain stable over time because the individual repeatedly rehearses them through fantasizing, observing or behaving (Huesmann and Eron, 1989). Interventions proposed by this model target children's scripts and beliefs about aggression. It is also thought that a child's cognitive processes are influenced by his/her parent's cognitive processes. For example, parents who view the world as hostile and threatening may reinforce their child's world view that the world is a hostile place (Huesmann and Eron, 1989).

Dodge and Crick (1994) present a reformulated Social Information-Processing Model that examines the different cognitive tasks that might be involved when a child is involved in a social interaction. This model proposes that children come to a social situation with a set of biologically determined



capabilities and a database or memories of past experiences; that they receive as input an array of cues; and that their response behaviour is a function of processing those cues (Crick and Dodge, 1994). The steps involved in the model include: "(1) encoding of external and internal cues, (2) interpretation and mental representation of those cues, (3) clarification or selection of a goal, (4) response access or construction, (5) response decision, and (6) behavioural enactment" (Crick and Dodge, 1994, p. 76). Research regarding the social information processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment demonstrates that cognitive deficiencies or biases in any one of the processing steps will result in aggressive behaviour. Interventions that are directed at increasing children's social information processing capabilities decrease the chances that children will act out aggressively.

Dodge (1991) has described a difference between children who use proactive and reactive aggression. Some children are proactively aggressive, they bother others and use their aggressive behaviour to meet their desired goals. Children who are reactively aggressive are bothered by others and react to them in angry, volatile ways.

Children who react aggressively are considered by their peers to be bothersome and aggressive. Children who are proactively aggressive are not only considered to be bothersome and disruptive but are also viewed as having a better sense of humour and more leadership qualities than their reactive counterparts (Dodge and Coie, 1987). Different intervention strategies need to be considered for responding to proactive and reactive aggression (Dodge, 1991).

## **Intervention**

With youth violence being such a prominent societal concern, a large number of intervention programs have been developed and implemented at many different levels. The diversity and goals of intervention programs vary widely from individual to family to community based efforts and from prevention to treatment.

It is helpful to use a public health model of primary, secondary and tertiary (treatment) prevention to identify and categorize the many levels and points at which intervention programs have been implemented with individuals. Primary prevention focuses on the general population and the promotion of prosocial competence; secondary prevention targets individuals that are already exhibiting aggressive behaviour or other risk factors related to aggressive behaviour, with the purpose of stopping the further development of aggressive and violent behaviour; and tertiary prevention (treatment) deals with the most seriously troubled youth, often those who are under psychiatric care, involved in day treatment or are incarcerated (Guerra, Tolan & Hammond, 1994).

There has been a proliferation of violence intervention programs in schools and other institutional settings (Burnaby School District 41, 1992; MacDougall, 1993; Wilson-Brewer, Cohen, O'Donnell & Goodman, 1991). However, a review of the literature in the field shows that many programs have been developed and implemented without attention being paid to empirical evaluation (Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Wilson-Brewer et al., 1991). Lam (1988) reviewed school-based mediation programs where she noted that quantitative evidence was limited, however, qualitative and anecdotal evidence generally reported positive results. Programs were reported to have a positive effect on student attitudes toward conflict and student mediators'

self-image, problem-solving skills, sensitivity to others and leadership experience, as well as the general school climate, the number of fights/violent inci-

tion and the amount of instructional time

aggressive and violent behaviour often occur at school, it seems to be the most feasible place for intervening with children and youth (Guerra et al., 1994) as regular mandatory attendance at school allows for effective and comprehensive program implementation.

School-based prevention programs have shown to be effective with the general student population i.e., those children and youth who are not displaying serious aggressive or violent tendencies (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). When intervention programs do not successfully reach particular children and youth it is often because they have repeatedly learned and been reinforced within a milieu of family violence (Eron et al., 1994).

Violence prevention within the school setting can work in two ways. First, it allows educators to proactively structure the learning environment to teach prosocial skills, so that violent behaviour is not learned. Second, educators can help students who already exhibit aggressive and violent behaviour to unlearn and replace their inappropriate responses with positive, prosocial attitudes and behaviour (Kazdin, 1994). Programs provide children and youth with resources to reduce at-risk behaviour as perpetrators, victims or bystanders of violence.

Programs that promote social and cognitive skills have been shown to have the greatest impact on attitudes and behaviours (Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Guerra et al., 1994; Kazdin, 1987, 1994; Kazdin, Esveltd-Dawson, French & Unis, 1987; Kendall, 1991; Pepler & Rubin, 1991). Although single-focused programs have met with some success the most promising interventions are multidimensional in nature (Reiss & Roth, 1993; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). These programs focus on social perspective-taking, alternative solution generation, self-esteem enhancement, peer negotiation skills, problem-solving skills training and anger management (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

### *Promising Interventions*

There is intervention research that offers support for a classroom and role-taking discussion approach to violence prevention. Spivack and Shure (1982; Shure & Spivack, 1988; Spivack, Platt & Shure, 1976) have also identified a number of other interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skills (ICPS) that are related to social behaviour. These include: generating alternative solutions, consequential thinking, means-ends thinking, social-causal thinking, sensitivity to problems and dynamic orientation. It has been found that programs which promote and facilitate the learning of ICPS skills strengthen social adjustment by increasing prosocial behaviour or decreasing aggressive and impulsive behaviour (Shure & Spivack, 1981; Spivack & Shure, 1982).

Aggressive children and youth have been found to define their interpersonal problems in a hostile manner, employ hostile goals in social interaction, look for few facts before acting, generate minimal problem-solving alternatives and anticipate few negative consequences for their aggressive behaviour. They choose aggressive solutions over prosocial solutions and believe that violent behaviour is legitimate, effective and socially acceptable (Guerra & Slaby, 1989; Slaby & Guerra, 1988). Considering this research, DeJong (1994) states that public health specialists have identified four key intervention points with youth: improving perspective-taking

skills, focusing on the negative consequences of violence, teaching how to negotiate non-violent solutions to conflict and recognizing the escalating process of conflict and what to do if things cannot be resolved.

Positive support for mixed peer group intervention comes from the work of Feldman (1992; Feldman, Caplinger & Wodarski, 1983). While evaluating the "St. Louis Experiment" it was found that antisocial behavior decreased in integrated groups but not in the delinquent-only groups. The behavior change was attributed to the influence of beliefs and behaviours of other group members. The implications are that groups norms can affect individual risk, that the antisocial behaviour of at-risk youth can be decreased in structured groups where they are mixed with prosocial peers.

Social problem-solving programs where youth are trained to follow specific steps to solve interpersonal problems have been found to be effective. In a study by Kazdin, Bass, Siegel and Thomas (1989) where youth under the age of 14 had been referred to a diagnostic treatment centre for antisocial behavior and were then randomly assigned to one of three intervention treatments: individual problem-solving skills training (PSST), individual problem-solving skills training plus in-vivo practice (PSST-P) and individual client-centred relationship therapy (RT). Results, based on child, teacher and parent reports of behaviour immediately after treatment and one year after treatment, showed that youth in both PSST conditions showed significant decreases in externalizing behaviour and improvements in prosocial behaviour. Results also indicated youth receiving PSST-P showed greater changes at post treatment in relation to child functioning at school than children in the PSST group.

Some programs that are school based have shown to improve prosocial competence and reduce at-risk behaviour. Schinke, Botvin & Orlandi (1991), in reviewing approaches to substance abuse, found that the most effective programs were broad based personal and social skills training. Components of effective interventions included: general problem-solving and decision-making skills, general cognitive skills for resisting interpersonal or media influences, skills for increasing self-control and self-esteem, adaptive coping strategies for relieving stress and anxiety through the use of cognitive coping skills or behavioural relaxation techniques, general interpersonal skills and general assertive skills (Schinke et al., 1991).

Reviewing family, school and community-based primary prevention programs aimed at strengthening children's psychosocial health, Weissberg, Caplan & Harwood (1991) concluded that school-based programs have shown to improve prosocial competence and decrease at-risk behaviour. School-based programs that have shown the most promise incorporate personal and social skills training with efforts to impact student knowledge, attitudes and behavioural competence. Weissberg et al. (1991) build a case for school-based programs that are ecologically oriented, where skills training focuses on teaching skills as well as providing realistic and meaningful opportunities to use the skills within established structures to provide reinforcement for effective skill application. They also identify a particularly promising direction for prevention research — to create multi-year, classroom-based skills training approaches that are at the centre of larger multilevel-systems efforts to promote social competence and health.

A program that was designed specifically to curb antisocial behaviour focused on increasing opportunities, skills and rewards for children in order to develop prosocial bonding to the family, school and peers (Hawkins, Catalano, Morrison, O'Donnell, Abbott, Day, 1992; Hawkins, Doueck & Lishner, 1988). The purpose of the classroom and school components were to increase child involvement and attachment to teachers and prosocial peers. The family-based component targeted the improvement of family management skills and conflict resolution regarding home and school misconduct. Other components of the program included peer-focused social skills training and community-focused interventions that included career education and counselling. Hawkins and colleagues (1988) report that low achievers in the seventh grade showed more bonding to school and less serious misbehaviour as measured by suspensions and expulsions from school than did their low-achieving control counterparts. Results of another program show that (Hawkins et al., 1992) children who were exposed to the intervention process from grades one through four showed a reduction in delinquent behaviour compared to the control group. Follow-up evaluations with these children in the fifth grade showed lower delinquency initiation than the control group.

When designing programs educators must pay particular attention to addressing the specific needs of the children and youth with whom they are working. When designing programs many factors must be taken into account: language that is consistent with the values, traditions and beliefs of ethnic and cultural groups; gender; age; and developmental characteristics (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). Programs that are implemented must be evaluated and improved upon on an ongoing basis so that the objectives and goals of the program are being met (American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993). When programs have limited effect it is important to realize that there are many societal factors that come into play. For instance, there may be an acceptance of aggression and violence in specific contexts such as corporal punishment, media violence and firearms. The impact of the program may also be influenced by the social and economic contexts that the children live in, such as poverty, social and economic inequality, prejudice, racism and the misunderstanding of cultural differences (American Psychological Commission on Violence and Youth, 1993).

### *Social Perspective-Taking, Empathy and Role-Taking*

Some related research findings regarding social perspective-taking, empathy and role-playing have been provided by Chandler (1973) and others. Typically young children are unable to accurately assess the informational needs of others and have been shown to fail at tasks which require genuine empathy and cooperation (Chandler & Greenspan, 1972). Under normal developmental circumstances, this initial egocentric orientation has been shown to give way gradually to a more perspective style of thought which makes possible new levels of social cooperation and competence (Looft, 1972). When developed, social perspective-taking refers to the ability to understand another's thinking and feeling about a situation, essentially to put oneself in another's shoes (Krough, 1985). As such, it is similar to the development of empathy.

A number of studies (cited in Chandler, 1973) support the view that prosocial behaviour is linked to the development of age-appropriate role-taking or perspective-taking skills and have demonstrated that a variety of forms of social deviancy are associated with persistent egocentric thought. Persons demonstrating developmental delays in the acquisition of these skills have been shown to systematically misread societal expectations, to misinterpret the actions and intentions of others and to act in ways which were judged to be disrespectful of the rights of others.

In a classic study Chandler (1973) found that intervention efforts which focused on specific training of role-taking skills substantially reduced the high level of social egocentrism which had previously characterized the adolescents in his study. The measurable impact of his remedial training program outweighed changes resulting from other intervention efforts and from changes attributable simply to the passage of time. As well, observed changes in role-taking skills were associated with a reduction in the amount of reported delinquent behaviour eighteen months later. More recent research has supported the effectiveness of role-play as a way of helping youngsters adopt the perspective of and empathize with others (Byrnes, 1988; Torney-Purta, 1981).

Another study (Krogh, 1985) which utilized primary children as subjects investigated the efficacy of role-play and structured discussion for enhancing perspective-taking skills. Since there was significant growth for both role-play and structured discussion subjects when compared to those in a control group at each primary level, the author recommended that teachers/counselors use both role-play and structured discussion in order to elicit participation from children with varying learning styles and to keep interest high.

### **Implications of Research Findings**

The foregoing review of the literature has a number of implications for the design of a school-based violence prevention program. First, although it is important to be aware of the many risk factors associated with the development of violence in children and adolescents, the school system must concentrate its efforts on risk variables such as poor impulse or emotional control, learned violent responses and poor peer relations, which it can directly effect. Other risk factors which cannot be changed within schools must be addressed by other institutions within the community.

Second, theories of aggression show that since aggression is a learned behaviour it can be unlearned and replaced with prosocial, non-aggressive behaviour. Furthermore, intervening states connect background and situational factors (antecedent conditions) to aggressive outcomes. These intervening protective factors, i.e. caring adults besides parents, development of high self esteem, internal locus of control, problem-solving skills; cognitive factors, i.e. aggressive beliefs, scripts, scenarios and biases; and affective states i.e. empathy, anger, frustration, guilt and fear are amenable to change in ways that prevent, reduce or block aggressive expression.

Thirdly, the following identified research findings regarding violence and aggression have to be carefully considering when designing and implementing violence prevention programmes

- Because adolescence is a time of heightened violence, it is important to begin interventions as early as possible to interrupt and redirect processes related to the development of violent behaviour.
- Since violent acts occur most often during arguments with an acquaintance, enhancing social skills and peer relations is important.
- Because normal control over impulses is necessary for the control of aggression, anger management and social problem solving must contain impulse control steps. Children and youth need to learn to adapt a reflective rather than an impulsive style.
- The affective state of anger must be addressed as affective aggression is driven or at least accompanied by anger.
- The abilities to generate alternative solutions to problems and manage frustration must be addressed since instrumental aggression is directed towards achieving a desired goal and often includes frustration.
- As people are more likely to aggress if they see a threat or provocation as deliberate or malicious in intent, i.e. attributional bias, improved social-perspective skills will open their thinking to alternative, less anger-provoking interpretations of other people's behaviour.
- Since aggressive responses in general are inhibited when people are afraid to aggress or anticipate feelings of guilt, children and youth need to clearly understand the consequences of aggressive behaviour.
- Because people are less likely to aggress if they have a range of alternatives from which to choose, the skill to execute these alternatives, and the expectation that they will lead to a positive outcome, young people need to learn how to both generate and practice effective alternatives to aggression.
- The antisocial behaviour of "at risk" youth can be decreased in structured groups when these youth are mixed with prosocial peers due to the influence of the beliefs and behaviours of other group members.
- As poor peer relations contribute to later antisocial behaviour and aggressiveness is the single most important reason for a child to be rejected, it is essential to teach social problem-solving skills.

Fourthly, theory and research-based violence prevention programs that have produced positive behavioural change confirm the importance of targeting the foregoing variables for change. The most effective programs have been multidimensional and have included components to address the following topics:

- Self esteem enhancement
- Awareness of the negative consequences of violence
- Improvement of social perspective-taking skills
- Anger management
- Generation of non-violent solutions to interpersonal problems
- Training of youth to follow specific steps to solve interpersonal problems, i.e. social problem-solving skills training

Finally, structured class discussions which include role-playing as a significant component have proven to be an effective method of implementing these changes. In addition, the class discussion technique, which is described in more detail in the next section, meets the following conditions of an effective strategy:



- the establishment of a positive relationship with a caring adult
- the development of prosocial attachment and bonding to peers and school
- the integrating of antisocial youth with prosocial peers
- peer group and instructor reinforcement of non-violent, prosocial ways of solving interpersonal problems
- the development of self esteem through the enhancement of personal competence

By reviewing the literature we have identified key areas to focus on in order to facilitate change. The goal of our program is to provide teachers and counsellors with a comprehensive, yet realistic tool that they can implement with their students in the classroom that will strengthen children's prosocial beliefs and interpersonal skills. If youth can learn to address and cope with violence in their world we will have provided them with invaluable life learning.



### **III The Class Discussion Technique**

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**E**ach developmental level section in this guidance book contains a number of class discussion sessions based on a model we developed by integrating research from three counselling areas: developmental counselling, group counselling and the "Egan" model of counselling. (The reader is directed to two previous publications [Allan & Nairne, 1992] and [Allan & Nairne, 1993] for a comprehensive description of this model.) These sessions help children explore problems, understand the problem from an expanded frame of reference and act constructively in their classroom and school. The class discussions emerge from a series of sequenced and structured questions. The class discussion technique presented in this manual utilizes a common method and skills.

#### **The Method**

A typical session begins with an introduction and warm-up, proceeds through an exploration, understanding and action step phase, and closes with a summary (termination). You will notice that some sessions do not proceed through each of these five phases. This occurs with some topics when a particular phase of the discussion requires an extended time frame for optimum theme development. Most class discussions, however, proceed through all of the following five phases.

#### **Introduction and Warm-up**

Begin each discussion with an introduction and warm-up of three to five minutes. It captures the interest of the class and prepares them for the upcoming discussion.

During the warm-up, ask closed questions, which can be answered with raised hands. Using the question "How many of you . . . ?" followed by some general inquiries about the topic involves the children in a non-threatening way. The children's responses to the warm-up questions also enable you to assess their general feeling about the topic. No actual discussion takes place during the introduction and warm-up.

#### **Exploration**

The exploration part of each discussion lasts for about ten minutes with primary children and fifteen minutes with junior/intermediates. During this time, have the children explore their thoughts and feelings about the topic by answering open questions that move sequentially from the general to the specific. When discussing the topic of friendship, for example, follow the general question "What are friends?" with "What do you like about having a friend?" and "Can you tell me about a time when you did something with a friend?"

During this stage, children often relate experiences from their lives. As each child speaks, you listen attentively, capture the essence of the story, reflect it back to the child and then move on to another member of the class. The goal is to help each child express personal thoughts and feelings.

## **Understanding**

With the third phase, which also lasts about ten to fifteen minutes, comes a conscious shift from exploring to understanding and from self to others; that is, moving the frame of reference from self to other people and to seeing other perspectives. In this section of the discussion, help the children gain some insight into and understanding of the dynamics in the issue. This is the place for more complex What? How? and occasionally Why? questions, such as, "How would a person feel if he/she didn't have any friends?" "How can you lose a friend?" and "Who is responsible for keeping friends?"

## **Action Steps**

In the five to ten minutes of the action step section of each discussion, you move into action and behavioural change by facilitating the generation of specific, concrete ideas that will help the children cope more constructively with a difficult aspect of their lives. Children frequently employ ineffective behaviours and strategies when dealing with their problems because they have not learned effective strategies. Questions like "If a person would like a friend, how can he/she make a friend?" induce movement to action steps. In this stage, children have an opportunity to learn new adaptive skills from their peers.

## **Termination**

At the end of the discussion, provide a summary of the session and closure. You can determine what the children learned by asking, "What did you learn from today's discussion?" Another approach is to have the students write about what they have learned in their activity books or journals. This provides time for solitary reflection on the ideas, principles and actions that have been discussed as well as for integration. With the older students we arrange to have the discussions before recess and after the break they then write the key learnings in their journals.

In sum, our class discussion technique addresses three distinct factors to produce the desired change in behaviour. The exploration phase concentrates on the relationship between you and the class members. The understanding phase focuses on new cognitive and affective "learnings," and the action phase emphasizes specific behavioural change. Four specific leader skills are also needed throughout the phases for the discussions to be successful.

## **The Skills**

Children need to feel safe and secure in order to develop new awareness and insight and to attempt changes in their behaviour. By using the skills of respect, genuineness, accurate empathy and concreteness throughout each phase of the class discussions, you can assist in the development of such an environment.

**Respect** in the helping process means prizing others simply because they are human beings. Respect must be more than an attitude. It must become a value that is expressed behaviourally in the ways you work with the children.

Caring about the welfare of children and considering each child to be a unique human being shows respect. Viewing children as capable of generating effective and helpful strategies demonstrates respect for them. Additionally,

attending and listening actively, suspending critical judgment and communicating empathic understanding are respectful behaviours.

**Genuineness**, like respect, is a value expressed in a set of behaviours. Genuine people relate deeply to others and help as part of their lifestyle. They do not put on or take off these roles at will. They are spontaneous, open and non-defensive.

**Accurate empathy** is listening to the child and then communicating your understanding of what he/she is feeling and the experiences and behaviours underlying the feelings. In its truest sense, accurate empathy is the ability to put yourself in the child's shoes and then express your perceptions of his/her world. When using accurate empathy you understand the core messages being expressed by the child and then respond fairly frequently, but briefly, to the main features of these messages: experiences, behaviours, feelings. The formula "You feel . . . because . . ." gets at the heart of the communication of accurate empathy. Accurate empathy is not mere parroting, restating, repeating or rephrasing. You look for the essence of the message and then communicate your understanding of it. When using accurate empathy, you dig down into what the child might be only half-saying or implying. The following is an example of an accurate empathic response:

**Child:** My mom and dad told me last night that we are moving to another city at Easter break. Today at recess I didn't even want to play skipping with my friends.

**Teacher:** You're sad because moving means leaving all your friends.

When joined with respect and genuineness, accurate empathy establishes rapport with children. It creates trust and openness and increases the level of self-exploration. The skill of accurate empathy is useful in every stage of the class discussion model.

**Concreteness** is the last of the skills essential to the class discussion technique. When children talk about themselves, they do so in terms of experiences (the things that happen to them) behaviours (what they do or fail to do) and affect (the feelings and emotions that accompany and relate to experiences and behaviours). If the problem is not clear, you must gently probe or question the child so that specific relevant, concrete experiences, behaviours, and feelings are expressed. Questions such as "What happened next?" "What did you do then?" and "How did you feel?" elicit more concrete exploration than Why questions, which children frequently cannot answer.

You provide the structure for the discussion by using carefully prepared questions that focus on the goal of each phase. You create, through the use of the four skills, a safe, cohesive classroom climate in which all members feel accepted and free to express their thoughts and feelings, gain insight and learn new ways of behaving. Below you will find a summary of the methodology used in our model.

## Classroom Discussion Model and Methodology

Stages of Session	Goal of Stage	Typical Types of Questions
1. <b>Introduction and Warm-up</b> 3-5 minutes	To introduce the topic and get everyone involved.	CLOSED QUESTIONS: (require "yes" or "no" answers) "How many of you...?"
2. <b>Exploration</b> 10-15 minutes	To help the students explore the problem by knowing and verbalizing their own thoughts and feelings.	OPEN QUESTIONS: <i>What?</i> Move from general "What is...?" "What experiences have you had with...?" "What does....mean to you?"
3. <b>Understanding</b> 10-15 minutes	To help the students objectively understand the problem area by moving their frame of reference from self to other people and seeing other perspectives.	OPEN QUESTIONS: <i>What? How? Why?</i> "For what reasons would someone...?" "How would the other person feel?" "How could....happen?"
4. <b>Action Steps</b> 5-10 minutes	To activate a sense of responsibility in the students by helping them move into action.	OPEN QUESTIONS: <i>What?</i> "What can you do to deal with...?"
5. <b>Termination</b> 2-5 minutes	To provide an opportunity for students to verbalize and write about new awareness and learnings.	"What have you learned from today's discussion?" "Can you write the key points in your activity book or journal?"

## **IV The Themes and Session Plan Implementation**

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**I**n order to meet the needs and stages of the variety of age-groups in the school system, we have designed three separate Violence Prevention Programmes. Although all of the programmes are meant to be implemented in a similar way, the ones written for Primary (kindergarten to grade three) and Junior/Intermediate (grades four to six) students are primarily developmental and concrete in nature. The Secondary Level Programme includes more abstract concepts and remedial components.

Even though the programmes are different, the dividing line between them is not meant to be rigid and each discussion leader will need to assess the group or class of students in terms of their developmental level. For example, leaders may find that some children in the fourth grade, especially those with limited previous experience discussing affective topics, may be more responsive to the primary themes. Similarly, groups of sixth graders who have had considerable experience participating in cooperative learning activities will enjoy the focus of the secondary themes.

### **The Theme Topics**

Each programme addresses four theme topics: Exploring and Understanding Emotions, Managing Emotions (especially anger), Nonviolent Social Problem Solving and Violence Awareness, and targets both the affective and cognitive domains. The goal of the themes is to promote emotional and social growth and development and the learning of prosocial attitudes and behaviour.

We recommend that the themes and the sessions within each theme be presented in the order in which they are listed. Often the session to session and theme to theme learning is cumulative and the sequencing provided leads to a fuller understanding both within and across the themes. Because of its affective emphasis it is important to begin and thereby anchor the programme with the theme on emotions.

### **Programme and Session Time Frames**

As each programme contains from sixteen to nineteen sessions, we suggest that the sessions be scheduled twice a week with several days between them, e.g. Monday and Thursday or Tuesday and Friday. This type of schedule allows the programme to be completed in from eight to ten weeks. With one session per week it is more difficult to maintain momentum and enthusiasm and three weekly sessions provide insufficient time for the integration of new information or follow-up activities.

The length of each session will depend to a large extent on the "collective" attention span of the group or the class. Typically the time for each session will be:

- Kindergarten: twenty minutes
- Grades one and two: twenty-five minutes
- Grades three and four: thirty minutes
- Grades five and six: thirty-five minutes
- Grades seven to twelve: forty to fifty minutes

In elementary/middle school it is best to schedule the sessions prior to a break (recess or lunch) so that the children have the opportunity to relax and reorient themselves before their next class. We have presented the programme during the last period of the school day, but some students say they are tired at that time and would prefer to have it earlier in the day.

### **The Class Discussion Questions**

The session questions are designed to help students explore and understand their thoughts and feelings regarding the session topics. The discussion leader may omit certain questions if they don't seem appropriate or relevant for their group or class and can add questions that "fit" into the flow of the discussion. It is always essential to ensure that an understanding of the session topic proceed the action steps.

Within the sessions, we have provided information for the leader in brackets [ ] and session suggestions in round brackets/parenthesis ( ). The information and suggestions are not meant to be exhaustive and both discussion leaders and students will undoubtedly think of many other possibilities. The dynamics of anger provided in the "Anger Diagram" seem particularly interesting to secondary students.

### **The Skill Steps**

A skill steps component is included in the understanding phase of many sessions. With groups and classes containing a number of children with weak prosocial skills, the discussion leader will need to add probing, concrete questions, such as the following, to stimulate the generation of the skill steps: "What do you do to show someone that you are listening to them? What's the first thing that you do when you want to join an ongoing activity? Would I look at Tommy or look away from him? Would I sit quietly or turn around in my chair?"

As the skill steps are generated they should be written on the chalkboard or on a chart. Sometimes it is easier to initially write the steps on the board and then later either transfer them to a chart or have a student reproduce them. Kindergarten and early primary students benefit from the addition to the steps of simple pictures.

When modelling the skill steps it is a good idea for the discussion leader to express the process steps that are involved verbally. For example, he/she might say: "I feel myself getting angry. What's the first step? I remember. I say 'stop.' I have to stop everything and figure out the smart thing to do here. Then I take some deep breaths. What next? I'll say, 'I'm not going to get myself in trouble!' That helps. Now, what's the next step?" and so on. By using this Think Out Loud strategy the implicit cognitive process that you want to students to learn is made explicit.

When the steps have been modelled by the discussion leader, he/she can proceed to model them with a student. After this, student volunteers can be asked to demonstrate the steps while the rest of the group or class observes. The leader will have to base the amount of time spent modelling the steps in a particular session on the needs of his/her particular students.

### **The Role-Plays**

In this programme, students at all ages are asked to role-play and practice their new skills. The majority of students enjoy role-playing and careful consideration by the leader of the composition of the pair and group members usually enables even the

more reluctant students to become involved in the role-plays.

Usually the role-playing of primary and junior/intermediate students seems to be most successful when the children practice in pairs. Primary students can easily relate to the idea of a "learning partner" while junior/intermediate students seem to enjoy the term "learning buddy." As much as possible, children need to be assigned to supportive partnerships and same-sex complementary pairs, e.g. extrovert-introvert, are preferable. If the pair works well together, they can continue to role-play with one another throughout the programme. If they are unable to help each other demonstrate the skills or steps, changes should be made. Occasionally elementary school-aged children with limited self-control cannot participate successfully in this type of activity with another child. In this case, the discussion leader may be able to find a way to practice with the child or he/she can sit and observe a pair demonstrate the prosocial behaviours.

With secondary students, preassigned permanent groups of four seem to provide the best opportunities for learning. The groups should include a mixture of personality types with a leader and a quiet member in each group. At this age level groups containing both boys and girls can usually work together effectively.

We have provided the discussion leader with some suggested role-plays/problem situations at the end of the theme whenever they are included in the theme sessions. We urge the leader, however, to provide specific situations from the classroom, playground, neighbourhood or home that are relevant to his/her students whenever possible. When using our "generic" situations older students seem to enjoy choosing a role-play situation from cards on which they are individually written.

To our delight, we have found that many secondary students enjoy creating their own role-plays based on real-life experiences they have encountered. If they do this, the groups will need to be provided with some additional time so that they can determine a way to present the situation to the class and then demonstrate their new skills. As senior students gain experience in and assume more responsibility for their own role-plays, the leader can assist by prompting, coaching and encouraging them.

Our experience has been that secondary students are very enthusiastic about role-playing, probably because of its inherent dramatic possibilities. Some groups will want to do more than one role-play in a session. As long as each group has the opportunity to participate in a role play and time allows, additional role-playing should be welcomed. Whenever a group successfully demonstrates nonviolent, prosocial behaviour, the leader should praise the effort by leading a round of hearty applause.

### **Follow-Up Activities**

The last action step in each session includes a termination activity which is designed to help the students reflect on what they have learned. The goal of these activities is to provide both closure to the session and either a class or individual record of the programme that students can keep for future reference or review. At the end of the Primary Level Programme, we have included Big Book Activities. For the Junior/Intermediate Level Programme there are Journal Activities and for secondary students we have suggested individual Keepsake Journal Records. The discussion leader may substitute alternative, meaningful follow-up activities.

Additional session extensions might include having students copy the S.T.A.R. steps on 3" x 5" cards and tape them to a corner of their desk or keep them in



their pockets for reference outside the classroom. As well students can create bulletin board displays containing the steps on posters or charts for the classroom or school hallways. Students should be continually encouraged, by their instructor and peers, to use and transfer their new skills to real-life situations that they encounter.

We hope that the Violence Prevention Programmes contained in this book are "user-friendly." We have attempted through our research, methodology and structured, detailed session plans to provide the discussion leader with all the resources that they need to launch a proactive, effective programme to modify violent attitudes and behaviour. We know that the implementation of clearly focused Violence Prevention Programmes in the school system can make a substantial contribution towards providing a long-term solution to the problem of violence.



## V The Programme Evaluation

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As with all guidance programmes teachers and counsellors need to conduct on-going evaluations at the end of each unit in order to assess what changes they would make and also to discover what was and was not meaningful to the students.

Also schools vary in their geographic location and in the types of violence, community problems and developmental issues facing their students. Our curriculum is flexible enough to address a variety of issues for it provides structures that allow for input from teachers and students alike. However in order to be sure that the programme is on track teachers and counsellors must arrange for a formal evaluation session with the students after the end of the programme.

We have done this as part of our field testing in the urban school district of Surrey, B.C. A copy of the evaluation form will be found on page 135. It is basically a series of questions with blank space for the students to write in their thoughts and feelings. We have noticed that we receive more meaningful feedback when students do not have to put their name on the feedback sheet. Sometimes we precede the written feedback with verbal discussion which often stimulates a richer response on the forms.

Our evaluations indicate that the students thoroughly enjoy the programme and identify many learning advances for themselves:

- The problem solving and anger control sections of the programme were far more popular (85%) than the empathy training (15%).
- Clearly what they liked best about the programme were the many role-plays (70%) followed by learning what they could do if they had problems (20%) and how they could control their angry feelings (11%).
- When asked what they did not like, most students responded with "nothing" or "liked everything" (48%). When pushed, a very small number identified empathy exercises (15%) and "having so many questions" (7%).
- Suggestions for improvements indicated more role playing and more student involvement in designing problem activities for enacting or discussing (59%).
- Other suggestions included bringing in teenagers who had worked through these problems, acting out problems that had happened that day in school and providing more time for everyone to talk.

When we asked students what they learned from the violence prevention programme they were quick to identify a wide range of behaviours and concepts. We have grouped these under the following headings.

## **Programme Evaluation**

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### **Feelings:**

Understand my feelings.  
Understand other people's feelings.  
Express feelings instead of violence.  
How to be kind and assertive.  
Tell your feelings to people you trust.

#### **Empathy:**

Think about other people's feelings.  
Calling people names hurts them.  
How to understand gangs, peer pressure and bullies.  
Don't laugh at others.  
I learned how to put myself in other people's shoes when they are feeling hurt, sad or mad.

#### **Talking to myself:**

How to talk to myself.  
How to calm myself down.  
Think before I do anything.  
Not to let anger control my mind.

#### **Direct Action:**

How to say No.  
How to control myself and my anger.  
When you get mad, wait for a few moments.  
How to get out of a situation where I don't feel comfortable.  
Don't fight; ignore it.  
I learned how to avoid peer pressure.  
Don't join gangs because it could be hard to get out.  
Stop before you reach for the trigger.

#### **Moral Development:**

Hitting someone is wrong.  
Talk and do not use your fists.  
Violence should not be used.  
You should never do something that you think is wrong.

What was interesting to us was that though the students did not rate the empathy training exercises very highly they clearly indicated by the number of responses that it was a significant learning outcome for them.

# VI

## The Session Plans *Primary Level*

Primary

# ***Feelings***

**Session 1:    Your Feelings**

**Session 2:    Sadness**

**Session 3:    Fear**

**Session 4:    Happiness**

**Session 5:    Others' Feelings — Empathy**

**Suggested Role-Plays**

# Session 1: Your Feelings

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## (1) Introduction

Today we are going to start a series of times together when you are going to have a chance to talk about a lot of things. During these times, there are two rules that I want you to follow: (1) Raise your hand if you have something you want to say and (2) Listen when other people are speaking. We will get together every (day) at (time). Today we are going to talk about feelings.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what feelings are?
2. How many of you don't really know what feelings are?
3. How many of you have lots of feelings?
4. How many of you don't have many feelings?
5. How many of you talk about your feelings?
6. How many of you don't talk about your feelings?

## (2) Exploration

1. What are feelings? [Something inside our body that we can't see or touch.]
2. Who has feelings?
3. What kinds of feelings do children have that feel good/comfortable?
4. What kinds of feelings do children have that don't feel good/comfortable?
5. Can you tell us about a time when you had a good feeling?
6. Can you tell us about a time when you had a feeling you didn't like?

## (3) Understanding

1. How does your body feel inside when you have feelings? [Feel hot, heart beats faster, tight muscles, queasy stomach.]
2. How do you know what name to give your feelings? [Think about what happened.]
3. Do feelings always stay the same?
4. Is it all right to tell people how you feel?
5. How do you tell people how you feel? [Say, "I feel \_\_\_\_\_."]

## (4) Action Steps

1. With your learning partner, I want you to pretend that you are in the situations I describe, decide on the feeling and then say, "I feel \_\_\_\_\_." Each of you will have two situations. (See suggested role-plays.) After you have practised, you will have a chance to show the whole class the feelings you had.
2. Big Book Activity.

## Session 2: Sadness

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we talked about last time? Today, we are going to talk some more about one of the feelings that you said you had sometimes... sadness.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you feel sad sometimes?
2. How many of you never feel sad?
3. How many of you think that teachers feel sad sometimes?
4. How many of you think parents feel sad?
5. How many of you think that everyone feels sad sometimes?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is sadness?
2. What kinds of things make children sad?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you felt sad? What happened? What did you do? What did you say?

### (3) Understanding

1. What kinds of things do children do when they feel sad? Does everyone act the same?
2. If you notice that someone in your class is feeling sad, what can you do?
3. When you feel sad, what can you do to feel better?
4. If you feel sad about something, do you think you will always feel that way?

### (4) Action Steps

1. Big Book Activity.

## Session 3: Fear

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### (1) Introduction

For the last two times during our talks, we have discussed feelings. Who can remember what feeling we talked about last time? Today we are going to talk about a different feeling... fear.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you get scared sometimes?
2. How many of you never get scared?
3. How many of you were scared of something when you were small, but aren't anymore?
4. How many of you think everyone gets scared once in awhile?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is fear?
2. What kinds of things can children be afraid of?
3. When can feeling afraid be a good feeling to have? [When there is a real threat to your safety.]
4. When is feeling afraid not a good feeling? [When the fear is imaginary or unrealistic.]
5. Can you tell us about a time when you were afraid? How did your body feel? What did you do?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do children get scared? [They don't know what something is, e.g. a big, noisy machine. They don't know if something will hurt them or not, e.g. a big dog.]
2. What should you do if you feel scared? [Talk to someone you trust about your feelings. Relax — take deep breaths. If it's not dangerous, try what you are afraid of doing.]
3. Do children overcome a lot of their fears as they get older? Why?

### (4) Action Steps

1. With your learning partner, I want you to pretend that you are in the situations that I describe and then tell what you could do so you don't feel so afraid. (See suggested role-plays.) You will be able to tell the class what you could do to handle your fear when you have finished.
2. Big Book Activity.



## Session 4: Happiness

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### (1) Introduction

Today we are going to talk about another feeling. Who can remember what feeling we talked about last time?... the time before that? The feeling we are going to talk about today is happiness.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you feel happy all of the time?
2. How many of you feel happy most of the time?
3. How many of you don't feel happy very often?
4. Is there anyone who never feels happy?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is happiness?
2. What kinds of things make children happy?
3. How does your body feel when you are happy?
4. Can you tell us about the happiest time in your life? How did your body feel? What did you do?

### (3) Understanding

1. Can children make themselves feel happy? How? [Do nice things for other people. Do nice things for themselves.]
2. What can you do to make other people feel happy? A friend? Your brother/sister? Your mom or dad? Your teacher?
3. What things can you do to make yourself feel happy?
4. For what reasons should you do nice things for others and yourself? [Makes you feel good inside.]

### (4) Action Steps

1. When other people do nice things for you it is a good idea to thank them and tell them how much you appreciate what they did. This will encourage them to do nice things for you again. With your learning partner I want you to pretend you are in these situations and tell your partner what you would say. You will each get two situations. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Big Book Activity.

## **Session 5: Others' Feelings — Empathy**

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### **(1) Introduction**

For the last four times we have been talking about your feelings. Today we are going to talk about feelings again, but we are going to discuss recognizing and understanding other people's feelings.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you usually know how other people are feeling?
2. How many of you find it hard to figure out how other people are feeling?
3. How many of you know what to do when you notice that someone else is upset?
4. How many aren't sure what to do when someone is upset?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. What kinds of feelings do other people have? [The same ones you have.]
2. How can you try to figure out how someone else is feeling? [Watch the person: see how they look (face) and what they are doing. Listen to the person. Hear what they say and how they say it.]
3. Can you tell us about a time when you figured out how someone else was feeling?

### **(3) Understanding**

1. For what reason is it important to understand how other people feel? [It helps you to understand others.]
2. How can you help yourself know how someone else is feeling? [Put yourself in their shoes and think about how you would feel in their situation.]
3. How can you let others know that you understand how they are feeling? [You can name the feeling, e.g. "You seem sad today," and/or you can offer to help, e.g. "You seem frustrated. Can I help you?"]
4. Are there any times that you should just leave someone else alone? [Yes, if they are very angry or upset.]

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. With your learning partner I want you to pretend that you understand how someone else is feeling in the situation I give you and then tell what you would say to the person. You will get two situations each to practise. (See suggested role-plays.) After you have practised with your partner what you would do and say, I will give you some time to show the whole class.
2. Big Book Activity.

# Suggested Role-Plays

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## Feelings

### Session 1: Your Feelings

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. You can't do your work at school, e.g. cutting, pasting, math.
  - b. A classmate laughs at you when you give the wrong answer.
  - c. Your friend/sister/brother won't let you play with him/her.
  - d. You get the present you were hoping for.

### Session 3: Fear

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. Your teacher wants you to read to the class.
  - b. Your friend wants you to climb some monkey bars with him/her.
  - c. Your mom wants you to pay the lady in the store for your chocolate bar.
  - d. A big boy in your neighbourhood pushes you down on your way home from school.

### Session 4: Happiness

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. A teacher tells you how much she/he likes the way you listened to a story.
  - b. A friend lets you play with his/her new kitten.
  - c. Your mom tells you she appreciated your help in setting the table.
  - d. Your brother or sister plays a game with you

### Session 5: Others' Feelings — Empathy

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. A classmate spills his/her drink all over the floor.
  - b. After a math worksheet is handed back, a classmate starts to cry.
  - c. A friend doesn't get picked to play a game.
  - d. A friend has a bad fall on the playground.

# ***Solving Problems With Classmates***

**Session 1: Anger**

**Session 2: Frustration**

**Session 3: How to Solve a Problem (S.T.A.R.)**

**Session 4: Expressing Anger**

**Session 5: Name Calling, Teasing and  
Put Downs**

**Session 6: Fighting**

**Suggested Role-Plays/Problems**

# Session 1: Anger

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## (1) Introduction

During our last five sessions, we talked about your feelings and other people's feelings. Today we are going to start another unit with six sessions in it and we are going to talk about another important feeling -- anger -- and solving problems with classmates, especially when we feel angry. Let's start with some questions.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you feel angry a lot?
2. How many of you feel angry sometimes?
3. Is there anyone who never feels angry?
4. How many of you think that everyone gets angry sometimes?
5. How many of you think that some people never get angry?

## (2) Exploration

1. What is anger?
2. How do people look when they are angry? [Face: colour, eyebrows, mouth. Voice: tone. Body: stance, gesture, movement.]
3. What kinds of things do people do when they're angry?
4. Can you tell us about the angriest time in your life? What happened? What did you do? What did you say? How did your body feel?

## (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do children get angry?
2. Is getting angry wrong? [No.]
3. What can be wrong about getting angry? [What people do.]
4. If children get mad and blow up or have a tantrum, what usually happens? [They do mean things. They get in trouble.]
5. How do you feel after you do something mean or get in trouble?

## (4) Action Steps

1. It is a good idea for children (and all people) to learn how to control their angry feelings so they don't do mean things and get in trouble. Your body usually lets you know that you are getting angry by giving you warning signals. The first step to controlling anger is to "stop and calm down" as soon as you start to feel mad. I am going to teach you two tricks today that will help you to calm down.
  - (a) The first trick is called "The Turtle Trick"...Close your eyes for a minute and imagine a turtle in your head. Raise your thumb when you've got one.... now imagine that someone is bugging the turtle and see it pulling into its

shell. Raise your thumb again when you've got this picture in your head.... now imagine yourself starting to get really angry at someone, just ready to blow up. Now imagine that you have a safe shell to pull into so you don't do or say anything mean. Notice how good it feels to be in your shell. You can't hurt anyone or you can't get yourself in trouble. You're in a cozy, safe place where you can relax for a minute and think about the best thing to do instead of blowing up. Raise your thumb when you can imagine yourself in your safe shell, feeling calm and powerful because you haven't lost your temper....when you're ready, open your eyes and take a big stretch.

- (b) The second trick is "The Talk to Yourself Trick." You can use this trick when you are pretending that you are in your shell. You say things to yourself like: "Take a deep breath and relax," "I can control my temper," and "I won't get myself in trouble."

## 2. Big Book Activity

## Session 2: Frustration

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what feeling we talked about last time? What were the names of the two tricks that you learned to help yourself stop and calm down when you can feel yourself starting to get angry? Today we are going to talk about a feeling that is similar to anger but not quite as strong... frustration.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you get to do everything you want to do?
2. How many of you can't do everything you want?
3. How many of you get upset when you don't get your own way?
4. How many of you don't mind if you don't get your own way?
5. How many of you can always do your school work?
6. How many of you sometimes have trouble doing your school work?

### (2) Exploration

1. To start today I am going to read you a story about a boy named Alexander. I want you to listen carefully because when I am finished I am going to ask you some questions. (Read the book *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst. Available in most school or public libraries.)
2. How do you think Alexander felt in this story? [Frustrated.]
3. Can you tell us about a time when you felt frustrated? What did you do?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do people feel frustrated? [When they can't do something or have something they want.]
2. Is feeling frustrated wrong? [No, there will always be times when you can't do or get things you want.]
3. If people keep getting frustrated about things they can get angry or sad and that won't help them solve their problems. You can use the two tricks you learned last time when you feel frustrated. Some good things to say in "The Talk to Yourself Trick" are: "It's not worth getting upset over. I can't always get my own way, people aren't always going to do what I want, I'll start over, I'll try again later."

### (4) Action Steps

1. With your learning partner I would like you to practice "The Turtle Trick" and "The Talk to Yourself Trick." I will give you each five situations to imagine (see suggested role-plays). You will have a chance to tell the class your "Talk to Yourself Trick" after you have practised.
2. Big Book Activity.



## Session 3: How to Solve a Problem (S.T.A.R.)

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we talked about last time? Has anyone practised the "Turtle Trick" or the "Talk to Yourself Trick" when you got angry or frustrated? Today we are going to talk about problems children have and learn some steps you can use to solve them.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you are good at solving problems?
2. How many of you aren't very good at solving problems?
3. How many of you sometimes have problems with your classmates?
4. How many of you never have problems with your classmates?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a problem?
2. Does everyone have problems sometimes?
3. What kinds of problems do children have with their classmates?
4. Can you tell us about a time when you had a problem with a classmate? What happened? What did you do? How did you feel?

### (3) Understanding

1. Does anyone have any ideas about what you can do when you are having trouble solving a problem?
2. There are four steps for solving problems that I think will help you. They are:
  - (1) Stop and calm down.
  - (2) Think: What are my choices?
  - (3) Act: Pick one choice and do it.
  - (4) Reward yourself.

The first letter of each step makes the word S.T.A.R.

### (4) Action Steps

1. I am going to give you some problems that children sometimes have with their classmates. I want you to decide on some ideas to solve the problem and then pick the one that you think is best. We will check around with each pair after the problem to see what you decided. I have four problems for you to talk about. (See suggested problems.)
2. Big Book Activity.

## Session 4: Expressing Anger

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### (1) Introduction

Last time we talked about problems and you learned some steps you can use when you have a problem. What is the first step? Who can remember what the second step was?... the third step?... the last one? Sometimes if you feel angry at a friend or classmate, a good way to solve the problem is to talk about it.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you think that friends (or classmates) get angry at one another sometimes?
2. How many of you don't think that friends (or classmates) ever get angry at one another?
3. How many of you know how to talk about your angry feelings?
4. How many of you don't know how to talk about your angry feelings?

### (2) Exploration

1. What things do friends (or classmates) do that make children mad?
2. Is it "normal" to sometimes get angry at your classmates?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you got angry at a classmate? What happened? What did you do? What did you say?

### (3) Understanding

1. When we get angry at our friends or classmates sometimes we blow up and say mean things and sometimes we try and hide our anger. Neither of these things solve the problem. A better way to solve a problem when you're angry is to tell your friend or classmate how you feel about what happened. You should use "I" or "It" statements. Some examples are: "I don't like it when you interrupt me," or "It bugs me when you take too long on the swing."
2. You just told me about some times when you got angry at a friend or classmate. I want each of you who told me about a problem with a friend to tell us what you could have said using "I" or "It" statements to let your friend know how you felt. Who will start?

### (4) Action Steps

1. I am going to tell you about some problems that friends (or classmates) are having and one of them is feeling upset or angry. Using "I" or "It" sentences I want the upset person to tell her/his partner how she/he feels about what happened. You will each get two turns. I will give you chances to show the whole class what you said. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Big Book Activity.

## Session 5: Name Calling, Teasing and Put Downs

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we talked about last time? What words should you use to start the sentences when you are telling a friend or classmate how you feel? Today we are going to talk about teasing, name calling and put downs and what you can do to deal with this problem.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have ever been called a name you didn't like?
2. How many of you like being called names?
3. How many of you don't like being called names?
4. Has anyone ever called someone else a name?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is name-calling?
2. What kinds of names have you heard children call one another?
3. Can you tell us about a time when someone called you a name you didn't like or teased you? How did you feel? What did you do?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do children call others names? [Trying to act "tough," trying to impress others, want reaction, displaced anger -- angry at someone else or about something else.]
2. How can you stop children from calling you names or teasing you? [Don't react: ignore it or walk away; say how you feel, or say, "Please stop or I'll \_\_\_\_\_."]

### (4) Action Steps

1. With your learning partner I want you to practice these ways of responding to teasing. I will give each of you two times to practice and then some of you can show the class. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Big Book Activity.

## Session 6: Fighting

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### (1) Introduction

Today is the last session we will have about solving problems with classmates and friends. Let's review what we have talked about in our five sessions so far. What did we talk about in our first session... the second one... etc.? Today we are going to talk about fighting.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have ever seen a fight, a real one or one on T.V.?
2. How many of you have never seen a fight?
3. How many of you like watching a fight?
4. How many of you don't like watching a fight?
5. How many of you have been in a real fight?
6. How many of you have never been in a real fight?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a fight?
2. Can you tell us about a time when you saw a fight? What did you like about it? What didn't you like? How did you feel inside?
3. If you have been in a fight can you tell us about it? How did you feel when you were fighting? How did you feel afterwards?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do children fight?
2. Does fighting solve problems?
3. What happens (what are the consequences) if you fight at school?
4. What happens (what are the consequences) if grown-ups fight?
5. If you feel angry and want to fight or someone wants to fight with you, what can you do to avoid it? Let's use our four problem solving steps. [1. Stop and calm down. 2. Think: what are my choices? Walk away for now, talk to the person, or ask someone for help in solving the problem. 3. Act: do the best choice. 4. Reward yourself.]

### (4) Action Steps

1. With your learning partner I want you to practice these ways of avoiding a fight. I will give you some situations that sometimes cause fights and I want you to pretend you are in the situation. Follow the rule: Talk don't hit. I will ask some of you to show the class your solutions. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Big Book Activity.

# **Suggested Role-Plays/Problems**

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## **Solving Problems with Classmates**

### **Session 2: Frustration**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. You have to stay in the classroom at recess and finish your work.
  - b. You can't figure out how to say a word in your reading book.
  - c. Your teacher tells you to stop talking to your friend during quiet time.
  - d. You can't skip a rope in P.E.
  - e. You can't find your shoe in the morning.
  - f. You made a mistake playing a game.
  - g. Your parents say that you have to go to bed.
  - h. Your team loses at a group game at recess.
  - i. You lose a ticket selling contest.
  - j. Your teacher won't let you go to the centre you want to go to.

### **Session 3: How to Solve a Problem (S.T.A.R.)**

- Suggested problems
  - a. You lost something you borrowed from a friend.
  - b. A classmate takes something out of your lunch kit without asking.
  - c. When you were playing tag, you ripped your friend's sweater.
  - d. You forgot your money for a field trip.

### **Session 4: Expressing Anger**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. Your classmate keeps kicking your chair.
  - b. A classmate borrows your eraser and won't give it back.
  - c. A friend teases you about your clothes.
  - d. A classmate bumps into you on purpose.

### **Session 5: Name Calling, Teasing and Put Downs**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. Some children are calling you "teacher's pet."
  - b. Someone teases you about your name.
  - c. Some kids laugh at you when you strike out in a baseball game.
  - d. Someone teases you about your glasses.

### Session 6: Fighting

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. A classmate says that he/she is going to tattle on you.
  - b. Someone cheats (doesn't follow the rules) in a game.
  - c. A classmate grabs the soccer ball from you.
  - d. Someone calls you a dummy.

# *Getting Along with Classmates*

**Session 1: Making Friends**

**Session 2: Joining In and Playing a Game**

**Session 3: Taking Turns and Sharing**

**Session 4: Asking a Favour and Showing Affection**

**Session 5: Keeping Friends and Apologizing**

**Suggested Role-Plays**



# Session 1: Making Friends

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## (1) Introduction

Today we are going to start some talks about something that children your age are always interested in... friends. We are going to talk about making friends, getting along with friends and keeping friends.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have a friend?
2. How many of you would like to have more friends?
3. How many of you have a friend in this class?
4. Does anyone have a friend in another class?

## (2) Exploration

1. What is a friend?
2. What's nice about having a friend?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you did something with a friend? How did you feel?

## (3) Understanding

1. If you want to meet someone new and get to know them, you have to introduce yourself. Who knows how you introduce yourself to someone? [Hi, my name is John. What's your name?]
2. After you have introduced yourself, you need to start a conversation. Does anyone know how to start a conversation? What are good questions to ask? [Where do you live? Have you got any brothers or sisters? Do you have any pets? What games do you like to play? What did you do in school yesterday? What did you do on the weekend?]
3. What are some good ways to end a conversation? [Talk to you later.]

## (4) Action Steps

1. Let's practice introducing yourself and beginning and ending a conversation. I'll give you some ideas for practising. You will both get time to practice each situation. Be sure to help your learning partner if he or she forgets what to do. (See suggested role-plays). I will let you show the class what you practised when we have finished if you want to.
2. Big Book Activity.

## **Session 2: Joining In and Playing a Game**

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### **(1) Introduction**

Who can remember what we talked about last time? One of the best things about having a friend is that you have someone your own age to play with. Today we are going to talk about playing with other children... how you ask someone to play, join in and play games.

### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you like to play games with other children?
2. How many of you don't like to play games with other children?
3. How many of you know how to ask someone to play with you?
4. How many of you don't know how to ask someone to play with you?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. What kinds of games or centre or free-time activities can you play in your classroom?
2. What kinds of games or activities can you do on the playground?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you played with someone in the classroom or on the playground? What did you play?

### **(3) Understanding**

1. How do you ask someone to play with you? [Think of a game, say: Would you like to play \_\_\_\_ with me?]
2. If some children are playing and you want to join in, how do you do it? [You need to ask in a polite, friendly way if you can join in.]
3. Most games that children play have rules. How do you find out what the rules are? [Ask someone to tell you.]
4. Usually the rules of a game tell you who goes first and usually you have to take turns. Why is it important to follow the rules?
5. If you play a game and win, what do you do? What do you do if you don't win?

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. With your learning partner I want you to practice asking someone to play and join in a game. Give your partner ideas if he or she isn't sure how to do it. (See suggested role-plays)
2. Big Book Activity.

## **Session 3: Taking Turns and Sharing**

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### **(1) Introduction**

Last time we talked about playing games.... how you could ask someone to play a game and how you could join in. Today we are going to talk about two other important things you have to know in order to get along with your friends and classmates.... taking turns and sharing.

### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you like taking turns when you play with a friend?
2. How many of you don't like taking turns?
3. How many of you like sharing with a friend?
4. How many of you don't like sharing?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. What does taking turns mean?
2. Can you tell us about a time when you took turns with a friend?
3. What does sharing mean?
4. Can you tell us about a time when you shared with a friend?

### **(3) Understanding**

1. For what reasons do you need to take turns or share?
2. Do children like to play with children who don't take turns? Why not?
3. Do children like to play with children who don't share? Why not?

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. Often when you are playing with a friend or classmate it is important to offer to take turns or share. I want you to work with your learning partner and make a taking turns or sharing plan for some situations. Decide what you could say. (See suggested role-plays.) I will let you show the class your plan of what to say when we have finished.
2. Big Book Activity.

## Session 4: Asking a Favour and Showing Affection

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### (1) Introduction

Last time we talked about two important things to remember which will help you get along with your classmates. Who can remember what those things are? Today we are going to talk about two other things I want you to know about.... asking a favour and showing affection.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a favour is?
2. How many of you don't know what a favour is?
3. How many of you know how to ask for a favour?
4. How many of you know what to do if someone does something nice for you?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a favour? [Something you want someone to do for you or help you with.]
2. What kinds of things might children want someone to do for them?
3. What kinds of things might children need help with?
4. Can you tell us about a time when you asked someone to do a favour for you?

### (3) Understanding

1. If you would like someone to do a favour for you, how should you ask? [In a friendly and polite way.]
2. If someone does a favour for you, what should you do? [Say thank-you.]
3. How do you feel when you do a favour for someone?
4. How do you feel when someone does a favour for you? How can you show people that you appreciate what they did for you? [Tell them about your good feelings. Give them a hug.]

### (4) Action Steps

1. I want you to practice asking for some favours with your learning partner. You will be able to ask for two favours each. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Big Book Activity.

## **Session 5: Keeping Friends and Apologizing**

---

### **(1) Introduction**

Today is our last session in this unit about getting along with classmates. Who can remember what we talked about the first time?... second time?... etc. Our topics for this session are keeping friends and apologizing.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you think that everyone makes mistakes?
2. How many of you think that some people never make mistakes?
3. How many of you think that we make mistakes with our friends and classmates sometimes.... we do or say mean things without thinking?
4. How many of you know what to do if you feel badly about something you did?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. What is a mistake?
2. What kinds of mistakes do children make with their friends and classmates?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you made a mistake with a friend? How did you feel after?
4. Is it okay to make mistakes? [Yes, no one is perfect.]

### **(3) Understanding**

1. If you do or say something to a friend or classmate and you feel bad about it after, what should you do? [Apologize, say you're sorry.]
2. When is the best time to apologize? [As soon as possible.]
3. Where is the best place to apologize? [In a private place, alone.]
4. How should you apologize? [In a sincere, serious way.]
5. Can children be friends again after they have made mistakes?

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. I want you to pretend that you've done something wrong to a friend or classmate and you want to apologize for it. I will give each of you two things to apologize for (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Big Book Activity.

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# Suggested Role-Plays

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## Getting Along With Classmates

### Session 1: Making Friends

- Suggested role-plays

#### *Introducing Yourself*

- a. Someone new becomes a member of your class.
- b. A new boy or girl your age moves into a house on your street/into your apartment building.

#### *Beginning and Ending a Conversation*

- a. A friend was away from school for two days.
- b. It is Monday and you haven't seen your friend since Friday. Find out what your friend did on the weekend.

### Session 2: Joining In and Playing a Game

- Suggested role-plays

#### *Asking Someone to Play*

- a. Suggest a game you can play at recess.
- b. Suggest a game or activity you can do in the classroom during free time.

#### *Joining In*

- a. Ask to join a game at recess.
- b. Ask to play with some other children in the classroom.

### Session 3: Taking Turns and Sharing

- Suggested role-plays

- a. You are on the swing at recess time. A friend comes over and stands by the swing.
- b. Your teacher tells you and a classmate to practice hitting a ball but there is only one ball and one bat.
- c. Your desk is beside a new student. During an art class you notice that he/she doesn't have any felt pens.
- d. You have a big lunch and you notice that the person next to you doesn't have a lunch.

#### **Session 4: Asking a Favour and Showing Affection**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. You want someone to help you with your school work, e.g. cutting, math worksheet, journal.
  - b. You need someone to help you get your jacket zipper working.
  - c. Someone is in your way and you want them to move.
  - d. Someone is bothering you by talking to you while you are trying to do your work.

#### **Session 5: Keeping Friends and Apologizing**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. You were mean to your friend because you were mad at your teacher.
  - b. You lost some money that your friend asked you to keep.
  - c. You promised your friend you would play with him/her but you forgot.
  - d. You say something mean about your friend to someone else.



# ***Heroes***

- Session 1:     Media Heroes**
- Session 2:     Real Heroes**
- Session 3:     I Can Be a Hero**

# Session 1: Media Heroes

---

## (1) Introduction

Today we are going to start a series of three class discussions. During class discussions children have a chance to talk about their thoughts and feelings. When we are having a class discussion there are two rules that I want you to remember. Raise your hand if you have something to say and listen when other people are speaking. The topic that we are going to discuss in our class discussions is heroes. Today we are going to talk about the kind of heroes you see in movies (at a theatre or on a video), on T.V. and in video games.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a hero is?
2. How many of you don't know what a hero is?
3. How many of you know what violence is?
4. How many of you don't know what violence is?

## (2) Exploration

1. What is a hero? [A person who shows great courage or strength or ability.]
2. Who are the heroes that you have seen in a movie, on T.V. or in a video game?
3. Some of the heroes you have told us about are violent heroes. Does anyone know what a violent hero is? [A person who uses force to cause damage or injury.]
4. What kinds of things do violent heroes do?

## (3) Understanding

1. How do you feel when you watch a violent hero?
2. Has anyone ever had a bad dream after you've seen a violent movie?
3. What would happen to a violent hero like the Terminator if he did the things here that he does in his movies? [He would go to jail.] Why would he go to jail?
4. What happens to real people who do violent things?
5. Do you think that small children should watch violent things on T.V. or at movies? Why or why not? [No, because most small children don't know the difference between what is real and what is imaginary and they could get really frightened.]

**(4) Action Steps**

1. If you feel scared when you watch something violent on T.V. what can you do to make yourself feel better? [Turn the T.V. off, go into another room and do a fun activity.]
2. How can you help a smaller child who is scared? [Same as above and explain that T.V. isn't real.]
3. Big Book Activity.

## Session 2: Real Heroes

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we talked about during our last session? Today we are going to talk about heroes again but we are going to talk about real heroes.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a real life hero is?
2. How many of you don't know what a real life hero is?
3. How many of you have a real life hero?
4. How many of you aren't sure whether you have a real life hero or not?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a real life hero? [Someone who you can touch, someone you would like to be like when you grow up.]
2. What kinds of people can be real life heroes to children? [A parent, a grandparent, a big brother or sister, an aunt or uncle, a teacher, a principal.]
3. Can you tell us about someone who is a real life hero to you, someone who you would like to be similar to when you grow up?

### (3) Understanding

1. What kinds of things do real life heroes do? [They listen to you. They encourage you. They teach you things.]
2. Are any of your real life heroes violent?
3. Can anyone think of any reasons why a child wouldn't want a violent person as a real life hero?
4. What is the difference between a real life hero and a T.V. or movie hero?

### (4) Action Steps

1. Big Book Activity.

## Session 3: I Can Be a Hero

---

### (1) Introduction

Today is our last class discussion about heroes. Who can remember what we talked about during our first session? What did we talk about last week? Today we are going to talk about children and how they can be heroes

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you think that children can be heroes?
2. How many of you don't think that children can be heroes?
3. How many of you think that you could be a hero?
4. How many of you don't think that you could be a hero?

### (2) Exploration

1. Can you remember what we said a hero is? [Someone who has special ability, courage or strength.]
2. What kinds of things can children do to be a hero? [Be kind and considerate to others, help other people.]
3. Can you tell us about a child who you know or have heard of who is a hero? What does or did he/she do?

### (3) Understanding

1. How do children get to be a hero? [By thinking about others and doing things to help them.]
2. Who could children be a hero to? [Your mom or dad, your brothers or sisters, your grandparents or other older people, "special needs" children.]
3. Would a child who bullied or was mean to others be a hero?

### (4) Action Steps

1. What could you do to be a hero to someone? (Try to get every child to think of one thing they could do.)
2. Big Book Activity.

# Big Book Activities

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## Feeling Big Book

### Session 1: Your Feelings

- Draw and colour some faces which show different feelings that you have. Older primary children can print the names of the feelings under the faces.

### Session 2: Sadness

- Draw and colour a picture of a time when you felt sad even if you didn't show it. Older primary children can complete the sentence, "I felt sad when \_\_\_\_\_," under the picture.

### Session 3: Fear

- Draw and colour a picture showing how your body feels when you are afraid. Older children can complete the sentence, "When I am afraid, my body feels \_\_\_\_\_," under the picture.

### Session 4: Happiness

- Draw and colour a picture or make a happy collage. Use happy colours, happy people, happy times and older children can print happy words.

### Session 5: Other's Feelings: Empathy

- Draw and colour a picture of a time when you knew how another person was feeling. Draw the person and what he or she looked like. Older children can complete the sentence, "(Name of other person) felt \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_," under the picture.

## **Solving Problems with Classmates Big Book**

### **Session 1: Anger**

- Draw and colour a picture that shows how anger feels to you. Put in colours and shapes that show how you feel when you get mad. Older children can complete the sentence, "When I am angry, I feel like \_\_\_\_\_."

### **Session 2: Frustration**

- Draw and colour a picture of yourself doing "The Turtle Trick" when you are angry or frustrated. Older students can print their "Talk to Yourself Trick" in a bubble above their heads.

### **Session 3: How to Solve a Problem**

- Draw and colour a picture of yourself solving a problem with a classmate. Older students can print the four S.T.A.R. steps at the bottom of the picture.

### **Session 4: Expressing Anger**

- Draw and colour a picture in which you show the best way to express anger at a friend. Older children can complete the sentence, "When I feel angry at a friend, the best thing to do is \_\_\_\_\_."

### **Session 5: Name Calling, Teasing and Put Downs**

- Draw and colour a picture in which you show a good way to act when people tease you or call you names.

### **Session 6: Fighting**

- Draw and colour a picture in which you show yourself following the rule: Talk, don't hit. Older children can complete the sentence, "A good reason to follow the rule TALK, DON'T HIT is \_\_\_\_\_."

## Getting Along With Classmates Big Book

### Session 1: Making Friends

- Draw and colour a picture which shows how you can make friends. Older children can complete the sentence, "I can make friends by \_\_\_\_\_" under the picture.

### Session 2: Joining In and Playing a Game

- Draw and colour a picture of yourself playing a game with some friends or classmates.

### Session 3: Taking Turns and Sharing

- Draw and colour a picture of yourself taking turns or sharing with a friend or classmate.

### Session 4: Asking a Favour and Showing Affection

- Draw and colour a picture of yourself asking a friend or classmate to help you. Older children can complete the sentence, "I can ask a friend or classmate to help me when \_\_\_\_\_"

### Session 5: Keeping Friends and Apologizing

- Draw and colour a picture of a time when you showed a friend how much you liked him/her as a friend.

## Heroes Big Book

### Session 1: Media Heroes

- Draw and colour a picture of someone who is a hero that you have seen in a movie or a video, on a T.V. programme or in a video game.

### Session 2: Real Heroes

- Draw and colour a picture of a real person that you know who is a hero to you.

### Session 3: I Can Be A Hero

- Draw and colour a picture of yourself being a hero to someone.



# VI

## **The Session Plans** *Junior/Intermediate Level*

**Junior/Intermediate**

# *Emotions*

- Session 1:     Your Feelings**
- Session 2:     Recognizing Others' Feelings**
- Session 3:     Empathy — Responding to Others' Feelings**
- Session 4:     We Are All the Same Inside**

# Session 1: Your Feelings

---

## (1) Introduction

Today we are going to start the first part of a series of class discussions. During these class discussions, you will have an opportunity to talk about your thoughts and feelings. The two rules I want you to remember during our class discussions are: raise your hand if you have something to say and listen when other people are speaking. Let's start with some questions.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have lots of feelings?
2. How many of you don't have any feelings?
3. How many of you think that feelings are good?
4. How many of you think that feelings aren't good?

## (2) Exploration

1. What are feelings? [Something inside us that we can't see or touch.]
2. Are feelings real?
3. What kinds of feelings do we have inside ourselves? [Write on board. Give prompt students to add words. Use as many feeling words as you can. Be sure to include: happy, sad, angry, scared, nervous, shy, lonely, embarrassed and frustrated.]
4. Are these feelings that you would rate about good or bad? [Neither, they are either comfortable or uncomfortable. Let's look at each one and if it is a comfortable feeling put a "C" after it and if it is uncomfortable put a "U."]

## (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons is it important to know what your feelings are? [Our feelings tell us what we need or what we should do.]
2. Sometimes when people have feelings they try to hide them. Can you think of any reason why people would try and hide their feelings?
3. Sometimes when we have a feeling, it is hard to know what the feeling is. How can you help yourself know what a feeling is? [Think about what has just happened.]
4. What would your life be like if you didn't have any feelings?
5. When you have a feeling, what should you do? [Try and name it. Say: "I feel \_\_\_\_\_."]

#### (4) Action Steps

1. For our class discussions I am going to give everyone a learning buddy so that you can practice some of the things we are learning. (Assign learning buddies.) Today I want you to talk to your buddy about the feelings that you have. You can take turns and talk about different feelings — comfortable and uncomfortable — until I say stop.
2. Journal Activity.

## **Session 2: Recognizing Others' Feelings**

---

### **(1) Introduction**

Who can remember what we talked about during our session last week? Today we are going to talk about feelings again and how to recognize other people's feelings.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you think that other people have feelings?
2. How many of you think that other people don't have feelings?
3. How many of you think that other children have feelings?
4. How many of you think that parents have feelings?
5. How many of you think that teachers have feelings?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. How can you tell how other people are feeling? [Facial expressions: eyebrows, mouth; tone of voice; body posture and stance: the way they stand, walk, sit.]
2. Now I'd like to play a guessing game. To start with, I would like you to close your eyes and think about a time when you had a strong feeling. Put your thumb up when you have thought of a feeling.... now think about how you could show that feeling to your classmates.... think about how your face would look... how your body would look.... when you think you can show the feeling to your classmates open your eyes. (Have volunteers come up to the front of the class and show the feeling. The other children can guess what the feeling is.)

### **(3) Understanding**

1. For what reasons is it important to learn how to recognize how other people are feeling? [It helps you understand why people are acting a certain way or predict what they might do, e.g. if they are angry or upset.]
2. Does knowing how other people are feeling help children get along with others?

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. I am going to give each pair of learning buddies two cards which have four feeling words printed on them. I want you to take turns showing your buddy a feeling word on your card and he/she has to guess what it is. When they guess the feeling the other buddy has a turn. (Print the words: sad, angry, happy, lonely, excited, afraid, embarrassed, shy on two cards.)
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 3: Empathy — Responding to Others' Feelings

---

### (1) Introduction

For our last two sessions we have been talking about feelings: how to know what you are feeling and how to know how other people are feeling. Today we are going to discuss how you can show other people that you understand how they are feeling.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know how to show people that you understand their feelings?
2. How many of you don't know how to show people that you understand their feelings?
3. How many of you know what empathy means?
4. How many of you don't know what empathy means?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is empathy? [The ability to put yourself in someone else's place/shoes and then let the person know that you understand how he/she feels.]
2. When someone else lets you know that he or she understands how you feel, how does it make you feel?
3. How do you think others feel when you show them that you understand their feelings?
4. Can you tell us about a time when someone understood your feelings?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reason should you show others that you understood how they are feeling? [It lets them know that you care about them.]
2. How can you show people that you understand their feelings? [You can talk to the person about the feeling you see, e.g. "You seem really sad today."]
3. How could you communicate empathy if a friend said: "I'm going to the hockey game with my grandpa on Saturday night"?
4. Are there any times when you should wait until later before you communicate empathy? [Yes, if someone is really upset or angry.]

#### (4) Action Steps

1. I want you to practice showing empathy for others with your learning buddy. I will give you each three sentences to say (put on board or card or piece of paper). You will take turns saying the sentences and your learning buddy will say, "You feel \_\_\_\_." (See sentences below.)
  - a) What's the use, he is on my back about everything I do?
  - b) I got a B on my math test!
  - c) I have so much to do I don't know where to start.
  - d) My mom has to go into the hospital for an operation.
  - e) I don't think that's fair.
  - f) The principal is going to phone my parents and tell them what happened.
2. Journal Activity.

## **Session 4: We Are All the Same Inside**

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### **(1) Introduction**

Today we are going to talk about children. We are going to discuss all the ways they are different and the ways in which they are the same.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you think that everyone in this class is the same?
2. How many of you think that everyone in this class is different?
3. How many of you think that we are the same in some ways and different in other ways?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. In what ways are the people in this class different? [Height, weight, hair colour, eye colour, skin colour, bone structure, etc.]
2. Does anyone know how it is that we all look different on the outside? Where does our unique look/characteristics come from? [Hereditary, ancestors.]
3. I notice that everyone in this class has a different skin colour. Does anyone know the reason that everyone has a different skin colour? [Explain melanin (the substance produced by the skin to protect it from the sun) and how people whose ancestors lived in very hot climates near the equator have skin which contains more melanin and is darker than those who lived in cool climates.]
4. As well as being different in our appearance, we often belong to different religions or cultures. [Mention the different religions/cultures represented in the class.]

### **(3) Understanding**

1. Sometimes children get teased because of the way that they look or for other reasons that make them different. Can you tell us about a time when someone teased or made fun of you because of your skin colour or weight or religion? How did you feel?
2. In what ways are everyone in the class the same? [We all have feelings and we all feel hurt when we are teased. We are all the same on the inside.]

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. Journal Activity.



# ***Managing Anger***

**Session 1: Anger**

**Session 2: Calming Down and Thinking**

**Session 3: Expressing Anger**

**Session 4: Practising the Steps**

**Suggested S.T.A.R. Steps and Role-Plays/Situations**

# Session 1: Anger

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## (1) Introduction

Today we are going to begin a series of four class discussions about a very important feeling... anger. During these sessions you will learn some things about anger and how to control it.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you get angry sometimes?
2. How many of you never get angry?
3. How many of you think that everyone gets angry sometimes?
4. How many of you think that some people never get angry?

## (2) Exploration

1. What is anger?
2. How do people look when they're angry?
3. How can you tell if you are getting angry? What signals does your body give you? [Sweaty palms, head aches, heart pounding, breathing gets faster, stomach gets tight.]
4. Can you tell us about a time when you were really angry? What did you do? What were the warning signals that let you know you were getting mad? How did you feel after?

## (3) Understanding

1. Is it all right to feel angry? [Yes, it's okay to feel angry.]
2. When is anger not right? [It's not okay to act mean.]
3. Does blowing up solve your problem? [No, it just gives you another problem to deal with.]

## (4) Action Steps

1. Next time we are going to start to practice four steps for managing anger. Does anyone have any ideas about what a step might be? I'll give you a hint...the first word of every step starts with one of these letters S.T.A.R. [Write four basic steps on board or chart. See S.T.A.R. steps.]
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 2: Calming Down and Thinking

---

### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we talked about during our last session? We talked about how your body gives you signals to let you know that you are getting mad and how you usually feel bad after you blow up. Today we are going to talk about the things that make you angry and how you can help yourself calm down and think so you don't "blow up."

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you get angry at your classmates sometimes?
2. How many of you never get angry at your classmates?
3. How many of you get angry at your brothers and sisters sometimes?
4. How many of you never get angry at your brothers and sisters?

### (2) Exploration

1. What kinds of things do your classmates do that really "bug" you and make you mad?
2. What kinds of things do your brothers and sisters do that make you mad?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you got angry at a classmate or a brother or sister?

### (3) Understanding

1. Would it be possible to never get mad?
2. For what reasons would it be impossible not to feel angry sometimes? [We never get everything we want, we are all hurt by others sometimes, life is not always fair.]
3. Who has the most power... a person who loses his or her temper or one who controls it?
4. Last time we learned the four S.T.A.R. steps that will help you control your anger. Who can remember what the first one was? How can you help yourself to stop? [Imagine/visualize a big red stop sign right in front of you.]
5. How can you calm down? [Calm down your body by taking two or three deep breaths and calm down your mind by talking to yourself and saying things like: "I can control my temper" and "I won't get myself in trouble."]
6. For what reasons is it important to stop and calm down? [So you don't do or say things that you are sorry for after.]
7. There are three main choices for the Think/2nd Step. What do you think they might be? [Walk away. Ignore the problem. Talk.]

**(4) Action Steps**

1. Now I want you and your learning buddy to practice the Stop and Calm Down and Think steps in front of the class. I will give you some situations that often make children angry. Who would like to volunteer to start? (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 3: Expressing Anger

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### (1) Introduction

For the last two sessions, we have been discussing anger and how to control it. Today we are going to talk some more about your choices in the Think step.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have practised the Stop and Calm Down step when you get mad?
2. How many of you haven't practised it?
3. How many of you practised this step at school?
4. Did anyone practice it at home?

### (2) Exploration

1. In our discussions about anger, we have talked about how it is okay to feel angry but it's not okay to blow up. What's wrong about blowing up? [We hurt others. We embarrass ourselves. We get in trouble.]
2. When some people get mad instead of blowing up they hide their anger. Is hiding your angry feelings a good way to deal with them? [No, the anger stays with us and makes us feel unhappy. Then it comes out in little ways like pouting, holding grudges and making mean remarks.]
3. Can you tell us about a time when you hid your anger?

### (3) Understanding

1. Who can remember what the second step in controlling your anger is? What are three good choices? [Walk away. Ignore the problem. Talk.]
2. When is walking away a good choice? [When you need more time to calm down, when the person is bigger or stronger or very mad.]
3. When is ignoring the problem a good choice? [When the problem is not a big deal/not important.]
4. For the talk choice, you can either talk to the person or talk to someone else. When is talking to someone else a good choice? [When you can't talk to the person or when you need help in knowing what to do.] Who can you talk to?
5. When is talking to the person a good choice? [When you want to solve the problem.]
6. How do you talk to someone you are mad at? What do you talk about? [Talk calmly about what you are angry about, how you feel and what you want.] (Write outline on board: When you \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I wish \_\_\_\_\_.)
7. For what reasons is talking about how you feel a good way to manage anger? [It allows you to get rid of your anger in a non hurtful way.]
8. What does talking about your anger show others? [You are growing up.]

**(4) Action Steps**

1. With your learning buddy I want you to practice talking to someone about how you feel. I will give you each two situations to imagine you are in. When we have finished, you will have a chance to show the class what you said. (See suggested role-play.)
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 4: Practising the Steps

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### (1) Introduction

Today is the last session in our group of class discussions about anger and how to manage it. Let's review the steps: What is the first step?.... the second step?.... the third step?.... the last one? Today we are going to talk some more about the last step and you are going to practice the steps again with your learning buddy. I'd like to start by finding out how many of you have tried one of the choices in the Think step.

### Warm-up Questions

When you were angry, after you calmed down:

1. How many of you walked away?
2. How many of you decided to ignore the problem?
3. How many of you talked to the person you were angry at?
4. How many of you talked to someone else about how you felt?

### (2) Exploration

1. After you have made a choice and done it, it is important for you to do Step Four: Reward yourself. How do you think that children can reward themselves? (Write on board: engage in non-aggressive physical activities, e.g. running, bike riding. Go to a favourite quiet place and do a pleasurable activity, e.g. go to your bedroom and read or listen to music. Work on a hobby. Talk to a stuffed animal or pet. Pat yourself on the back and tell yourself what a good job you did, e.g. "I remembered to take some deep breaths," "I was smart enough to walk away," "I handled that well," "I sure am growing up.")
2. For what reasons is it important to reward yourself? [To encourage yourself to keep working on controlling your anger.]

### (3) Understanding

1. Which of the four steps is the hardest one for you to remember?
2. Can anyone who has tried these steps in a real situation tell us what you did and how it worked out for you? (Elicit as many testimonials as you can.)

### (4) Action Steps

1. With your learning buddy I want you to practice these steps for six situations that I want you to imagine. You will each get a chance to practice three. I will let you show the class what you decided when we have finished. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Journal Activity.

# Suggested S.T.A.R. Steps and Role-Plays/ Situations

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## Managing Anger

### Session 1: Anger

- S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down
  - Calm down your body. Take deep breaths.
  - Calm down your thinking. Talk to yourself about what you need to remember in this situation.
2. Think
  - What are my choices right now?
  - What are the possible consequences of each choice?
3. Act
  - Do the best choice.
  - If talking is the best choice, talk to the person about how you feel and what you want [When you \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I wish \_\_\_\_\_."] or talk to someone else about how you feel.
4. Reward Yourself
  - Do a physical activity. Examples: bike riding, running, walking.
  - Express feelings by drawing or writing.
  - Do a pleasurable activity. Examples: reading, listening to music.
  - Work on a hobby.
  - Talk to a pet or stuffed animal.
  - Pat yourself on the back and tell yourself what a good decision you made.

### Session 2: Calming Down and Thinking

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. A classmate takes your ball away from you at recess.
  - b. A classmate tells the teacher on you.
  - c. A classmate borrows your pencil and breaks it in half.
  - d. A classmate bumps into you on purpose.
  - e. A classmate says something about you that isn't true.
  - f. A classmate accuses you of something you didn't do.
  - g. You ask a classmate to play a game with you and they won't.



- h. Your brother/sister changes the channel while you are watching your favourite show
- i. Your friend promises to meet you after school and forgets.

### Session 3: Expressing Anger

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. A friend hasn't returned a tape/CD/video/video game that he/she borrowed from you.
  - b. A brother or sister takes a toy out of your room without asking.
  - c. Your parents give you more chores around your house than your brother/sister.
  - d. A classmate wrecks a book that you lent him/her for a science project.

### Session 4: Practising the Steps

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. During a test, the boy/girl who sits behind you keeps kicking your chair.
  - b. On your way to the gym, a classmate pushes you and says you're in his/her place.
  - c. As you get on the bus for a field trip a classmate takes the seat you were going to sit in.
  - d. A classmate jumps on you and you fall down.
  - e. Your friend tells you that a girl was talking about you behind your back. She said she thought you were really dumb.
  - f. Your brother/sister tattles to your mom and dad about you.

# ***Problem Solving***

**Session 1: Frustration**

**Session 2: Put Downs**

**Session 3: Accepting Criticism**

**Session 4: Peer Pressure**

**Suggested Role-Plays/Situations**

## Session 1: Frustration

---

### (1) Introduction

In this group of four class discussions, we will be talking about some common problems that children your age can have both in school and out of school. We will learn some specific ways you can use the S.T.A.R. steps to deal with these problems.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what the word "frustration" means?
2. How many of you don't know what frustration is?
3. How many of you get frustrated sometimes?
4. How many of you never get frustrated?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is frustration? [An uncomfortable feeling, not quite as uncomfortable as anger.]
2. What kinds of things do children find frustrating?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you got really frustrated? What happened? What did you do? How did you feel?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do people get frustrated? [They can't do something or have something they want.]
2. Can you think of any reasons why children should learn how to manage their frustrated feelings? [You can't always have everything you want or do everything you want.]
3. We can use the S.T.A.R. steps to learn to manage frustration. What things could you say to yourself to calm down your mind in the first step? [Examples: It's not worth getting upset about. It's not the end of the world. I'll start over. I'll start again later.]
4. What choices could you have in the Think step? [Talk to the person and suggest a compromise or trade; Ask for help; Talk to someone you trust about your frustrated feelings.]

### (4) Action Steps

1. I want you and your learning buddy to practice using the S.T.A.R. steps to manage frustrated feelings in these eight situations. I want you to take turns and you can both do four of them. When you have finished practising I will ask for volunteers to show the class what you decided to do. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 2: Put Downs

---

### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what this series of four class discussions are about? What problem did we talk about last time? Today we are going to talk about another problem — put-downs.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a put-down is?
2. How many of you don't know what a put-down is?
3. How many of you have been put down by someone else?
4. How many of you have never been put down?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a put-down? [The word or words people use when they tease or make fun of others.]
2. What put-downs have you heard children use at school?
3. Can you tell us about a time when someone put you down? How did you feel? What did you do?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do children put others down? [Make themselves look bigger or better than others. To impress other kids. To make other kids laugh.]
2. Is getting angry or lashing out or giving back a put-down a good way to react to a put-down? [No, you will just get more put-downs.]
3. Just as in other angry situations, when you get a put-down you can use the four S.T.A.R. steps. How do you do the Stop and Calm Down step?
4. What are some good choices for the Think step? [Walk away. Ignore it. Tell the person how you feel. Agree with the person and made a joke of it, e.g., "Thanks for the compliment."]

### (4) Action Steps

1. I have two imaginary situations where a person gets put down. I want you to use the S.T.A.R. steps to figure out with your learning partner how to deal with them. I will ask a number of you to show the whole class what you decided (See suggested situations.)
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 3: Accepting Criticism

---

### (1) Introduction

Another problem children (and adults as well) have sometimes is that people get angry at us because of the things that we do and we need to know how to deal with their criticism.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have ever had a friend get angry at them?
2. How many of you have never had a friend get angry at you?
3. How many of you have ever had a parent get angry at them?
4. Has anyone ever had a teacher get angry at them?

### (2) Exploration

1. What kinds of things do your friends get angry at you about?
2. What do parents get angry about?
3. What things that children do get teachers angry sometimes?
4. Can you tell us about a time when someone got angry at you?

### (3) Understanding

1. How do you feel when people get angry at you? [Angry. Upset because you think that the person doesn't like you anymore. Defensive....you want to deny the criticism.]
2. Is it normal for friends to get mad at each other sometimes?....for parents to get mad at children?....for teachers to get angry at children?
3. Would it be possible for anyone to go through life and never have anyone get angry at or criticize them? [No.] Why not? [Because everyone makes mistakes; no one is perfect.]
4. If someone (a parent, friend, teacher) gets angry at you does it mean that they don't like/love you anymore?
5. If someone gets angry at you, does it mean they will always be angry at you or do people's feelings change?
6. We can use the S.T.A.R. steps to help us when people get angry at us. What could you say to yourself during the Stop and Calm Down step to calm down your mind? [Examples: People are supposed to tell each other when they are made. Maybe I made a mistake; The smart thing to do is keep quiet and listen. Excuses and arguing won't help.]
7. Usually your best choice in the Think step is to talk to the person, either then or later. What can you say? [Explain why you did or didn't do what the person is mad about. Apologize in words or write a note. Offer to make up for what happened.]

#### 4) Action Steps

1. With your learning buddy I want you to practice talking to someone who is angry at you. I have ten imaginary situations so you will each get a chance to practice five of them. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Journal Activity.

## Session 4: Peer Pressure

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### (1) Introduction

Today is the last of our four class discussions about dealing with specific problems that children have sometimes. Who can remember what we talked about the first time?....the second time?....last time? The topic that I want to talk about today is peer pressure.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you belong to a group of friends?
2. How many of you don't belong to a group?
3. How many of you have ever been excluded by a group?
4. How many of you know what peer pressure is?
5. How many of you don't know what peer pressure is?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a peer group?
2. What's nice about having a group of friends?
3. Can you think of any disadvantages to belonging to a group of friends?
4. Can you tell us about the things that you do with your group of friends?

### (3) Understanding

1. What is peer pressure?
2. What's good or can be good about peer pressure? [Your friends can talk you into doing some fun activities you might not get a chance to do on your own, e.g., camping, hiking. Your friends can talk you into doing positive things, e.g., school assignments, homework, joining a sport activity or team.]
3. Can you think of any problems that can be a result of going along with a group? [Problems can arise if you engage in illegal activities, e.g., theft, vandalism, violence.]
4. What makes it hard to say "no" to a group if they want to do something that you don't want to do? [You are afraid that you will lose your friends if you don't go along.]
5. Does anyone know what you can say if you don't want to do something with your friends but still want to keep them as friends? [You can say: "I don't want to do \_\_\_\_\_ because I think it is \_\_\_\_\_ AND I don't want you to do it either because I care about you and I don't want anything to happen to you.]

#### (4) Action Steps

1. For our practising today I want two groups of learning buddies to work together. I will give each group of four a situation written on a card (some groups will get the same one) and I want you to decide how three of you could show the peer pressure situation and then one of you says you don't want to do it. You will all have a chance to show the class. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Journal Activity.



# **Suggested Role-Plays/Situations**

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## **Problem Solving**

### **Session 1: Frustration**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. Your teacher says you have to stay in the classroom at recess because you didn't finish your work.
  - b. A classmate teases you because you can't solve a puzzle.
  - c. You are having trouble drawing a dog for an art project.
  - d. Your dad won't let you stay up to watch a T.V. movie.
  - e. Your teacher won't let you talk to your friend in class.
  - f. Another student grabs the ball you wanted to play with.
  - g. Your teacher says it is time to clean up and you haven't finished your painting.
  - h. You can't do a somersault in P.E.

### **Session 2: Put Downs**

- Suggested situations
  - a. Imagine that you're playing baseball and you strike out. Two kids laugh at you can call you a "klutz."
  - b. Imagine that some kids are teasing you and calling you "teacher's pet."

### **Session 3: Accepting Criticism**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. You promised to keep something your friend told you a secret but you told two other friends.
  - b. Your friend was in charge of bringing in the class balls. You said that you would bring the balls in for him/her but you forgot.
  - c. You cheat in a game you are playing with a friend.
  - d. You tease a friend about his T-shirt.
  - e. Just for a joke, you pull the chair out from under your friend as he/she goes to sit down.
  - f. You take something out of your friend's lunch without asking.
  - g. You promised your mom you would tidy your bedroom but you forgot.
  - h. You lost your sweater that your grandma gave you.

- i. You got your runners all muddy.
- j. You left a centre messy at school when you were finished playing there.

#### **Session 4: Peer Pressure**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. Some friends want you to smoke a cigarette.
  - b. Some friends want you to drink some liqueur they found in the park.
  - c. Some friends want to steal some pogs (or other collecting/trading items) from the store and they want you to go with them.
  - d. Some friends are teasing a younger student in the park after school.

# ***The Media and Violence***

**Session 1:    The Media**

**Session 2:    Media Heroes**

**Session 3:    Personal Heroes**

**Session 4:    Violence**

## Session 1: The Media\*

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### (1) Introduction

Today we are going to start a series of four class discussions on the media. During this time you will have an opportunity to talk about your thoughts and feelings about a lot of things that you see in the media. While we are having these discussions there are two things that I want you to remember: Raise your hand if you have something to say, and listen when other people are speaking. Let's start with some questions.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what the word "media" means?
2. How many of you don't know what "media" means?
3. How many of you watch a lot of shows on T.V.?
4. How many of you don't watch a lot of T.V.?
5. How many of you watch a lot of video movies on T.V.?
6. How many of you play a lot of video games?

### (2) Exploration

1. What does the word "media" mean? [Media means mass communication. In our discussions, the media we will be talking about are T.V., movies/video movies, and video games.]
2. What are your media favourites/the ones you like best? (List on board under appropriate titles.)
  - a) What T.V. show do you like best?
  - b) What is your favourite movie/video movie?
  - c) What video game do you like the best?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons are these your favourites? (List on board.)
2. It seems like the main reasons that you like T.V. shows, movies/video movies or video games are because they are funning, exciting, scary, etc. How do you feel when you watch funny shows? How do you feel when you watch scary shows?
3. Can you think of any reasons why children shouldn't watch scary shows? [They have bad dreams/nightmares. They think that what they see in the show is real.]
4. What do you think are the best kinds of shows for children to watch? [Ones that aren't scary. Ones about real things, etc.]

**(4) Action Steps**

1. What can you do to help yourself if you feel scared when you watch something in the media? [Turn off the T.V. Leave the room. Talk to someone you trust about how you feel. Remember that what you are watching isn't real.]
2. How can you help younger children if they feel scared?
3. Journal Activity.

\* Because of their violent scenes, the following movies were restricted (R-rated) when they were originally shown in movie theatres: Robocop 1 and 2, Terminator 1 and 2, Die Hard 1 and 2, Rambo, Silence of the Lambs, Nightmare on Elm Street, Pet Semetary, Fatal Attraction, Basic Instinct, Total Recall, Body of Evidence.

## Session 2 : Media Heroes

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### (1) Introduction

Last week we started a series of four class discussions. Who can remember what we are going to talk about during these discussions? Today we are going to talk about the media again and we are going to talk about media heroes.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a hero is?
2. How many of you don't know what a hero is?
3. How many of you know what a media hero is?
4. How many of you don't know what a media hero is?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a hero/heroine? [A person or character who has special abilities or power.]
2. What heroes do you know about? In books? In sports?
3. What would a media hero/heroine be? [A character on a T.V. show, movie/video or video game.]
4. What kinds of things do media heroes do?
5. Now I want you to close your eyes for a minute and think about the characters you have seen on T.V. and I want you to tell us which one is your favourite media hero. When you have decided, open your eyes and put your hand up. [List on board.]

### (3) Understanding

1. What kinds of problems does or did your hero have?
2. How does your hero solve his/her problems?
3. Sometimes media heroes, like the Terminator, solve their problems by hurting or killing others. What happens in real life if people hurt or kill others? [They go to jail.] What would happen to the actor who plays the Terminator if he came here and hurt or killed people?
4. Are media heroes real or imaginary? Are the things that they do real or imaginary?

### (4) Action Steps

1. Journal Activity.

## Session 3: Personal Heroes

---

### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we discussed during our last session? Today we are going to talk about heroes again but this time I want to hear your thoughts and feelings about a different kind of hero... a personal hero.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a personal hero is?
2. How many of you don't know what a personal hero is?
3. How many of you have a personal hero?
4. How many of you don't know if you have a personal hero or not?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a personal hero? [A person that you know well, someone who you can touch, who has special abilities.]
2. What people can be personal heroes to children? [Parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, teachers, principals.]
3. Now I want you to close your eyes for a minute and think about the people that you know, especially people who are older than you... I want you to think of one of these people who are special to you...someone you admire or look up to. ..When you have thought of someone open your eyes and put up your hand. I would like everyone to tell me who their personal hero is.

### (3) Understanding

1. What kinds of things do your personal heroes do? (List on board.)
2. How are personal heroes different from media heroes?
3. Does anyone have a personal hero who is violent? Why not?
4. How do your personal heroes solve problems?
5. Can someone your age be a personal hero to someone? How?

### (4) Action Steps

1. Journal Activity.

## Session 4: Violence

---

### (1) Introduction

Today is the last of our four discussions about the media. Who can remember what we talked about during our first session?... the second session?... last time? Before we start today's discussion I'd like to ask you some questions.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what the word "violence" means?
2. How many of you don't know what violence means?
3. How many of you think that violence is a good way to solve problems?
4. How many of you think that violence isn't a good way to solve problems?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is violence? [That which has great force and causes damage or injury.]
2. What different types of violence are there? [Assault — hitting; Assault with a weapon — shooting, stabbing, hitting with an object; Harsh discipline — whipping.]
3. Sometimes there are violent scenes or situations shown in the media. Can you tell us about some violence that you have seen in the media?

### (3) Understanding

1. Can you think of any reasons why watching violence in the media isn't good for children? [They learn violent ways of solving problems. They imitate T.V., movie, video heroes. They don't see the consequences of violence.]
2. When we talked about media heroes, we discussed what happens to real people in real life if they hurt or kill people. In real life, what happens if a person is a victim of violence? Besides the victim, who else does violence affect? [The friends and family of the victim.]
3. Do you want to live in a place where there is violence? Why or why not?

### (4) Action Steps

1. Instead of watching violence on T.V. what other activities can children do at home that are fun? [Play cards and board games. Participate in outdoor play activities and sports. Develop and work on a hobby.]
2. Journal Activity.



# Journal Activities

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## Emotions

### Session 1: Your Feelings

- In your journal, complete these sentences:

The comfortable feelings I have are \_\_\_\_\_

The uncomfortable feelings I have are \_\_\_\_\_

### Session 2: Recognizing Others' Feelings

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

A time when I recognized someone else's feelings was when \_\_\_\_\_

### Session 3: Empathy: Responding to Others' Feelings

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

A time when I showed empathy for someone was when \_\_\_\_\_

### Session 4: We Are All the Same Inside

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

Three ways in which all the members of this class are the same are. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Journal Activities *continued***

### **Managing Anger**

#### **Session 1: Anger**

- In your journal, write about the angriest time in your life.

Then tell how you felt after you blew up: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 2: Calming Down and Thinking**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

The worst things about getting angry and blowing up are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 3: Expressing Anger**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

It would be a good choice to talk to the person I am angry at when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 4: Practising the Steps**

- In your journal, make a list of good things to do when you're angry and things you shouldn't do.

ANGER	
DO	DON'T

## **Journal Activities *continued***

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### **Problem Solving**

#### **Session 1: Frustration**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

I can help myself deal with frustration by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 2: Put-Downs**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

Three things I can do if someone gives me a put-down are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 3: Accepting Criticism**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

When people get angry at me, the best things to do are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 4: Peer Pressure**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

Some problems I could have if I do something with my friends that I know is wrong are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ***Journal Activities continued***

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### **The Media and Violence**

#### **Session 1: The Media**

- In your journal, complete these sentences:

The best kinds of shows and movies for children to watch are \_\_\_\_\_

The reason that these are the best shows for children is \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 2: Media Heroes**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

Some important things for children to remember when they are watching media heroes are: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 3: Personal Heroes**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

I could be a hero to someone by \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Session 4: Violence**

- In your journal, complete this sentence:

I can help to prevent violence by \_\_\_\_\_

# VI

## **The Session Plans** *Senior Level*

Senior

# *The Problem*

**Session 1:    Violence**

**Session 2:    The Dynamics of Violence**

## Session 1: Violence

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### (1) Introduction

Today, we are going to start a series of discussions about violence and how to prevent it. We will talk about a number of topics and I want to hear your thoughts and feelings about them. We will also learn about and practice some things you can do to prevent violence. I have planned 18 sessions and we will meet once a week (or twice a week) at the same time until we are finished. Let's get started.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have seen a violent incident on T.V., a video or at a movie?
2. How many of you have seen/witnessed an actual violent incident?
3. How many of you have had a friend or someone you know involved in a violent situation?
4. How many of you have been involved yourself in a violent situation?
5. Is there anyone who has never seen or been involved in any violence?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is violence? [That which has great force and causes damage or injury.]
2. What different types of violence are there? [Assault — hitting; assault with a weapon — shooting, stabbing, hitting with an object; sexual violence — rape; harsh disciplines — whipping.]
3. What is interpersonal violence? [Violence between family members, friends or acquaintances.]
4. Can you tell us about your experience with violence?
  - a. What violent incident that you saw on T.V., a video or a movie do you remember?
  - b. What violent incident have you actually seen?
  - c. What violent situation has a friend or someone you know been involved in?
  - d. What violent situation were you involved in?

### (3) Understanding

1. How do you feel when you see violence in the media?
2. How do you feel when you witness actual violence?
3. How do you feel when someone acts violently towards you?
4. Is violence good or bad? Why?
5. For what reasons does violence occur? [Anger; previous abuse; uncontrolled emotions — jealousy, fear, frustration; unmet needs; lack of skills — not knowing how to get what you want in a nonviolent way; copying violence from the media.]

**(4) Action Steps**

For what reasons should you think and talk about violence? Write your ideas in your Journal Record.



## Session 2: The Dynamics of Violence

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### (1) Introduction

Last week during our session you talked about your experiences with violence. Today I want to continue our discussion about violence by showing you a film called "Balablok." [A twelve-minute film by B. Pojar available from the National Film Board of Canada.] In the film I want you to notice how the characters were feeling at the beginning of the movie and how these feelings change. [Show the film.]

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you liked this movie? Didn't like it?
2. How many of you thought it was a funny movie?
3. How many of you feel that you understand the movie?
4. How many of you aren't really sure what the movie is about?
5. How many of you liked the blocks the best? The balls best?

### (2) Exploration

1. What did you like about this movie?
2. What didn't you like?
3. How did you feel when you watched the war? The quiet church scene?

### (3) Understanding

1. What incident near the beginning of the film changed the mood of the characters? What happened after that? What happened next? How did the film end?
2. For what reasons do you think that the blocks acted the way they did?
3. How do you think the ball felt?
4. Have any of you ever been in a situation where you felt like the blocks? Like the ball?
5. Who do you think was in the right — the blocks or the ball? [Neither.]

### (4) Action Steps

1. What could the blocks have done differently to prevent the war?
2. What other things could the ball have done?
3. Write in your Journal Record what you learned from watching this movie and discussing it.

# ***Empathy: Understanding and Communicating Emotions***

**Session 1:     Knowing and Expressing  
                    Your Feelings**

**Session 2:     Recognizing and Showing  
                    Understanding of Another's  
                    Feelings**

**Session 3:     Communicating Empathy**

**Session 4:     Stereotyping, Labelling and Prejudice**

**Suggested Role-Plays**

# Session 1: Knowing and Expressing Your Feelings

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## (1) Introduction

Last time, we watched the film "Balablok" and had a discussion about it. At the end of our session we came up with some ideas about how the violence in the film could have been prevented. One cause of violence is a lack of understanding of other people's feelings. Before you can understand other people's feelings, you need to gain an understanding of your own emotions and feelings.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have lots of feelings/emotions?
2. How many of you don't really have many feelings?
3. When you have a feeling how many of you know what it is?
4. How many of you don't really know what to name your feelings?

## (2) Exploration

1. What are feelings or emotions?
2. What are the names of some feelings that you know? [Write on board.]
3. You have named quite a few feelings but there are a few more that I want you to know. I have written a number of feelings on cards and I would like some of you to volunteer to demonstrate them. The rest of us will try and guess the feeling. [Give out cards for any of the following feelings that weren't suggested: shocked, irritated, delighted, proud, ashamed, confused, curious, frustrated, hurt, furious, embarrassed, afraid, excited, disappointed, relieved, happy, sad, jealous, depressed, angry.]

## (3) Understanding

1. How can you figure out how you're feeling when you're not sure? [The situation and body cues: blushing, tight muscles, queasy stomach, etc.]
2. How can you get to know your feelings better? [When you have a feeling, name it, i.e. I feel \_\_\_\_\_.]

## (4) Action Steps

1. I have written some situations on cards and I want you to discuss these situations in your group and have a member of your group tell us the situation and then role play how he/she would feel and say "I feel \_\_\_\_\_. If there is time, you will be able to do more than one if you want. [See suggested role-plays.]
2. In your Journal Record, complete the sentences by writing down three feelings that you have and when you have them. You can add more feelings if you want.

## **Session 2: Recognizing and Showing Understanding of Another's Feelings**

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### **(1) Introduction**

During our last session we talked about knowing and expressing your feelings. Today we are going to focus on recognizing and showing understanding of someone else's feelings.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you are pretty good at figuring out how other people are feeling?
2. How many of you usually don't know how other people are feeling?
3. How many of you know how to respond (what to say or do) when you notice other people's feelings?
4. How many aren't really sure what to do or say?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. What can give you clues as to how someone else is feeling? [Watch the person — check posture, facial expression; what the person says or does and the situation.]
2. Can you know for sure how someone else is feeling by watching/observing them? [No.]
3. How can you know how someone else is feeling? [Ask them.]

### **(3) Understanding**

1. For what reasons might it be important to understand another person's feelings? [To understand or predict his/her behaviour.]
2. What choices do you have when you have a good idea about how another person is feeling? [Leave the person alone. Talk about what you see, i.e. you seem kind of down today. Ask if they want to talk.]

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. I am going to give each group a card describing a person. In your group I want you to decide how you think the person is feeling and what you think would be the best way to respond to the person. Then I want you to arrange to role play the situation and your response. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. In your Journal Record draw or write about a time when you showed understanding of another person's feelings.

## **Session 3: Communicating Empathy**

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### **(1) Introduction**

For the past two sessions we have been talking about a lot of different feelings, your own and others. Today we are going to talk about a specific feeling — empathy.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you know what empathy means?
2. How many of you sort of know what empathy means?
3. How many of you really don't know what empathy means?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. What is empathy? [Experiencing the emotions of another person.]
2. What is sympathy? [Compassion for someone else.]
3. Are empathy and sympathy the same or different? How?
4. Can you tell us about a time when you had empathy for someone?

### **(3) Understanding**

1. What can help us develop empathy for other people? [Having had a similar experience and thinking about how we felt or putting ourselves in someone else's shoes/situation and thinking of how we would feel.]
2. How do you think that developing empathy for others could help to prevent violence?
3. How can you show empathy for other people? [By active listening — maintain eye contact, lean forward, smile, nod; by not interrupting; by communicating understanding of others' feelings.]

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. I am going to read you three situations one at a time and I want you to close your eyes and imagine yourself in them. Then I want you to imagine how you would feel and what would help you. After you open your eyes after each situation is described, I want you to reach agreement in your group about how the person would feel and what would help and then we will share your ideas with the class. (See suggested situations.)
2. In your Journal Record write down the ways that you communicate empathy to your classmates and the members of your family.

## **Session 4: Stereotyping, Labelling and Prejudice**

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### **(1) Introduction**

Who can remember what we talked about during our last session?... Today we are going to talk about some of the attitudes, opinions and judgments that can interfere with people's ability to have empathy for others.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you think that everyone in this class is the same?
2. How many of you think that everyone is different?
3. How many of you think that everyone in this class is the same in some ways and different in some ways?
4. How many of you have ever been teased or called a name because of how you look?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. In what ways are people different from one another? [Height, weight, bone structure, colour of eyes, hair, skin, shape of eyes, nose, face, etc.]
2. You mentioned that people often have different skin colour. Does anyone know what causes skin colours to be different?
3. In what ways are people the same?
4. Can you tell us about a time when you were teased/called a name because of how you looked? How did you feel?

### **(3) Understanding**

1. Sometimes people have opinions, attitudes and judgments about people in different racial, religious and cultural groups that are negative or hostile. Does anyone know what this is called? [Stereotyping, labelling, prejudice.]
2. Is everyone in a racial/religious/cultural group the same, i.e. do they have the same characteristics? How are they different?
3. Can stereotyping people lead to violence? How?

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. How can you help yourself/prevent yourself from judging people due to their race, religion or culture?
2. In your Journal Record write down some of the things that you can do to prevent prejudice and stereotyping of others.

## **Suggested Role-Plays**

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### **Empathy: Understanding and Communicating Emotions**

#### **Session 1: Knowing and Expressing Your Feelings**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. You have been given a math assignment and you don't know how to do it.
  - b. Your parents promised to buy you a baseball when they went shopping but they forgot to get it.
  - c. Your friend promised to go to the park/shopping with you on Saturday but now he/she can't.
  - d. You want to answer a question in class but aren't sure if the answer is right.
  - e. Your parents won't let you stay up late and watch a movie and you know some of your friends are planning to watch it.
  - f. A classmate calls you a jerk.
  - g. A classmate is spreading some untrue rumours about you.
  - h. A friend makes a joke about your new T-shirt.
  - i. A classmate is copying your answers on a test.
  - j. A friend wants you to only be friends with her/him.
  - k. A friend wants you to do things with him/her but never wants to do things with you.
  - l. A friend won't talk to you and you don't know why.
  - m. A friend borrows a tape/C.D. from you for the weekend and doesn't bring it back.

#### **Session 2: Recognizing and Showing Understanding of Another's Feelings**

- Suggested role-plays
  - a. A classmate starts to cry or gets upset after he/she gets a test back.
  - b. Your mom is muttering to herself as she picks up your clothes.
  - c. A classmate is watching a group of people from your class play a game.
  - d. A classmate is upset or crying because someone won't talk to him/her.
  - e. A classmate throws a game off the table after losing.
  - f. Your brother/sister won't talk after your dad got mad at him/her.

#### **Session 3: Communicating Empathy**

- Suggested situations
  - a. A classmate is struggling to do a math problem.
  - b. A friend falls off her/his bike or roller blades or skateboard and gets hurt.
  - c. Your mom is having trouble getting a piece of toast out of the toaster.

# ***Anger Control***

**Session 1: Exploring Anger**

**Session 2: Understanding Anger**

**Session 3: Managing Anger**

**Session 4: Anger Control Summary**

**Diagram, Steps for Controlling Anger and  
Suggested Role-Plays**



## Session 1: Exploring Anger

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### (1) Introduction

During our last session we talked about labelling, stereotyping and prejudice and how it could prevent us from getting to know other people. Before that we talked about feelings and emotions and the specific feeling of empathy. Today and for the next three sessions we are going to talk about another very important, very common feeling... anger.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you think that everyone gets angry sometimes?
2. How many of you think that some people never get angry?
3. How many of you get angry sometimes?
4. Is there anyone who never gets angry?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is anger?
2. How do people look when they are angry?
3. What kinds of things do people do when they are angry?
4. Can you tell us about a time when you were really angry? What did you do? How did your body feel?

### (3) Understanding

1. Sometimes we feel angry and sometimes we feel very angry. What words can you think of which mean angry? [Write on board: Cross, offended, grouchy, upset, annoyed, irritated, sulky, etc.] What words mean very angry? [Write on board: livid, irate, furious, seething, infuriated, incensed, etc.]
2. Usually we have two basic impulses when we get very angry. Who knows what they are? [Fight or flight.]

### (4) Action Steps

1. In your Journal Record I want you to either draw a picture of or write about, the angriest time in your life.

## **Session 2: Understanding Anger**

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### **(1) Introduction**

Last time we talked about anger and you told me about a time when you got really angry. Today we are going to talk about anger again and I will give you some information which I think will help you to get a better understanding of it. Let's start with some questions.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you know what types of external events trigger or set off your anger?
2. How many of you know what internal thoughts and words escalate your angry feelings?
3. How many of you don't know what I am talking about?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. An external event usually triggers or sets off our anger. What is a common external trigger? [Don't get something we want. Someone insults us. Someone hurts us. Someone treats us unfairly.]
2. Internal triggers escalate angry feelings. What might an internal trigger be? [The internal thoughts, words, messages we give ourselves.]

### **(3) Understanding**

1. I am going to draw a diagram (see end of section) on the board that I think will help you understand your anger better. Does anyone have any ideas about what this means? [As anger escalates/increases thinking decreases.]
2. In the next sessions, I am going to show you four steps you can use to control your anger. By looking at the diagram what do you think the first step might be? [Stop and calm down.]

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. How do you think you can calm down your body?
2. How can you calm down your mind?
3. In your Journal Record write down some ways that you can help yourself to calm down your body and your mind when you get angry.

## Session 3: Managing Anger

---

### (1) Introduction

During our last session I put a diagram on the board to help you to understand your anger better. Who can remember what the message in the diagram was?... who can remember what the first step in controlling anger is?... today we are going to look at some more steps and do some role-plays.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you think that when your anger is triggered you can control it all of the time?
2. How many of you can control your anger most of the time?
3. How many of you really can't control your anger?
4. How many of you would like to control your anger?
5. How many don't want to learn?

### (2) Exploration

1. Anger is an emotion. When can it be a bad emotion?
2. Can anger ever be a good emotion? [Yes, as long as it is controlled, it can provide energy for doing worthwhile, important things.]
3. In our last session, we said that the first step in controlling anger was to Stop and Calm Down. Step two is Think, step three is Talk and step four is Feel Good Again. [Write on board — see steps at end of theme.]

### (3) Understanding

1. What should you think about in Step 2? For what reasons should you think about these choices?
2. In Step 3, who should you talk to? What should you say? For what reasons should you talk?
3. In the last step, what can you do to make yourself feel good again? Why should you help yourself feel good again?

### (4) Action Steps

1. I want you to practice these steps so I have written some situations that can trigger anger on these cards and I am going to give each group one of them. I will give you five minutes to discuss how you could role play the situation and demonstrate the steps you could use for managing your anger. If we have time I'll give you another one. (See suggested role-plays).
2. The four steps for controlling anger are written in your Journal Record so that you can review them in the future. Draw some pictures to illustrate these steps.

## **Session 4: Anger Control Summary**

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### **(1) Introduction**

During our last session, we talked about four steps for controlling anger. Who can remember what the first step was?... the second step... the third step... the last step? Today we will have our last session about anger. We will talk some more about it and do some more role-plays.

#### **Warm-up Questions**

1. How many of you have been involved in a situation where you got angry since our last session?
2. If you got angry, how many of you practised the Stop and Calm Down step?
3. How many of you didn't use the Stop and Calm Down step?
4. How many of you haven't been angry since our last session?

### **(2) Exploration**

1. We did some role-plays last time of some situations that can cause people to get angry. Often anger is a secondary emotion which means that there is another emotion underneath it. What other emotions are hidden under anger? [Hurt, embarrassment, frustration, fear, disappointment, guilt.]
2. Can anyone tell me about a time when you got angry and there was another emotion underneath it?

### **(3) Understanding**

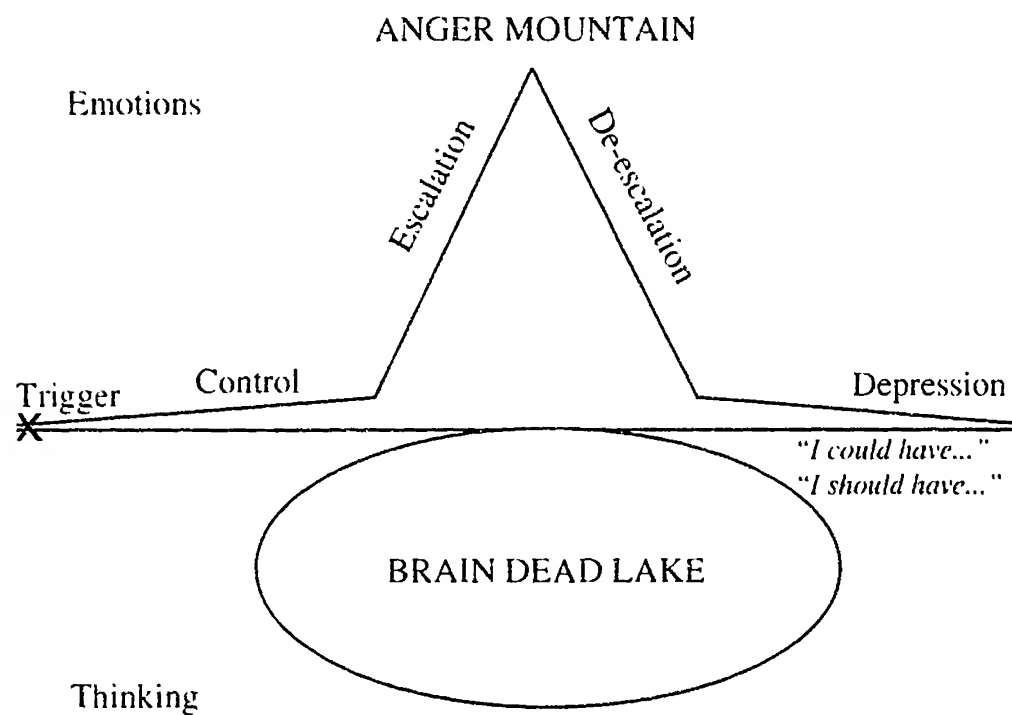
1. Who has the power in a potentially violent situation: the person who can control their anger or the person who can't?
2. For what reasons does the person who can control their anger have power?
3. What are the potential consequences for people who won't learn to control their anger? [Can wreck relationships with family members and friends. Go to jail. Get fired from job.]

### **(4) Action Steps**

1. Let's finish this section on anger control with some more role plays. We will use the same procedure as last time (see suggested role-plays.)
2. In your Journal Record make up a bumper sticker with a catchy phrase to show what you have learned about controlling anger... something like: Don't Blow Up, Grow Up.

# Anger Control Diagram

## Session 2: Understanding Anger



## Four Steps for Controlling Anger and Suggested Role-Plays

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### 1. Stop and Calm Down

- Calm down your body by taking some deep breaths or counting backwards from 10.
- Calm down your mind by saying to yourself:  
"I can control my temper."  
"I won't blow up."  
"I won't get myself in trouble."

### 2. Think

- Think about your choices: should you stay or walk away or ignore it?

### 3. Talk

- Talk to the person you're mad at about what you're mad about, how you feel and what you want.  
"When you \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I wish \_\_\_\_\_."
- Talk to someone you trust about the problem.

### 4. Feel Good Again

- Do something that makes you feel good to get your mind off what made you angry. Examples: Use some energy — walk, run, ride a bike. Do something relaxing — listen to music, read, draw, write.

### Session 3: Managing Anger

- Suggested role-plays
- a. A friend borrows your pencil and breaks it in half.
- b. A classmate keeps kicking your chair.
- c. Someone bumps into you on purpose.
- d. A friend borrows your hockey shirt and rips it.
- e. A classmate tells the teacher about some trouble you had on the playground.
- f. Your friends go to the park and they don't ask you.
- g. Your teacher is angry at you for talking in class.
- h. Your mom blames you for something you didn't do.
- i. Your dad won't let you watch your favourite T.V. show.
- j. A friend talks about you behind your back.

### Session 4: Anger Control Summary

- Suggested role-plays
- a. You don't think that your teacher has been fair to you.
- b. A classmate asks you a personal question about your family.
- c. A classmate pushes you when you are lining up for an assembly.
- d. Someone calls you a name in front of your friends.
- e. Your dad won't let you have a friend over to your house.
- f. Your mom is angry at you because you didn't tidy up your bedroom.
- g. Your friend broke a promise.
- h. Your brother or sister tattles on you to your mom or dad.
- i. A friend cheats in a game.
- j. Someone teases you about your hair-cut.

# ***Problem Solving and Solutions to Specific Problems***

**Session 1:       The Steps**

**Session 2:       Finding Solutions**

**Session 3:       Assertiveness**

**Session 4:       Peer Pressure**

**Session 5:       Gang Pressure**

**Session 6:       Bullying**

**Session 7:       Avoiding a Fight**

**S.T.A.R. Steps and Suggested Role-Plays**



# Session 1: The Steps

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## (1) Introduction

Today we are going to start our last theme on Violence Prevention... Problem Solving. We will work out a four step process for solving problems and then some solutions for some specific problems. Let's start with some questions about problem solving.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you think that you are able to solve all your problems?
2. How many of you are able to solve most of your problems?
3. How many of you aren't very good at solving problems?
4. How many of you think that there is a solution for every problem?
5. How many of you think that there are some problems which can't be solved?

## (2) Exploration

1. What does the word "problem" mean?
2. What is problem solving?
3. Now, in your groups, I would like you to list the problems you have which you find difficult to solve. I want you to focus especially on problems you have with friends, classmates, other students and the people in your family. [Debrief each group and list problems on the board under categories of school, home, community, other.]

## (3) Understanding

The problem solving process that I want you to learn has four steps in it. The word S.T.A.R. gives you the first letter of each of the four steps. [Write each step on the board — see end of section.]

1. What might the "S" stand for?
2. What do you think the "T" means?
3. What would the "A" want to remind you of?
4. What could the "R" be for?

## (4) Action Steps

1. In your groups I want you to use the four steps to solve the following problem. Then I want you to role play the solution you decide on. Problem: You don't understand how to do a math assignment. When you are ready you can show the class.
2. The S.T.A.R. Steps are written in your Journal Record. As a review, I would like you to colour and illustrate them

## Session 2: Finding Solutions

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### (1) Introduction

During our last session, I introduced a new theme. Can anyone remember what it was? We learned four steps for solving problems. Who can remember what they were? Today we are going to spend some more time on the Think step and do some more role-plays.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you can usually think of several ways to solve a problem?
2. How many of you can usually only think of one way to solve a problem?
3. How many of you often can't think of any solution to a problem?
4. How many of you know how to pick the best solutions to a problem?

### (2) Exploration

1. Before you practice problem solving in your groups, I want to practice the Think step with all of you with a problem. The problem is: you are sure a friend of yours is stealing from the school. Another student has been unjustly accused. From your point of view, what is the problem?
2. What are your choices? [Have the students brainstorm as many choices as they can. Doing nothing is always a choice.]

### (3) Understanding

1. Once you have generated a number of choices/possible solutions, you need to evaluate them in terms of safety and fairness and pick the one that seems the best. Let's go through each choice and put a check (✓) after it if it's safe and a check if it is fair.
2. Any of the solutions with two checks is a good choice. Let's have a class vote to see which one you think is the best.

### (4) Action Steps

1. I have some different role-play problem situations for each group. I want you to go through the steps and then role-play the Act and Review steps for the class. [See suggested role-plays.]
2. In your Journal Record draw or write a problem you have had recently and your "best choice" solution to it

## Session 3: Assertiveness

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what topic/theme we are working on now in this programme?  
Sometimes when you are trying to solve a problem you must be assertive.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what being assertive means?
2. How many of you don't know what being assertive means?
3. How many of you know what being aggressive means?
4. How many of you don't know what being aggressive means?
5. How many of you know what being passive means?
6. How many of you don't know what being passive means?

### (2) Exploration

1. When you are having a problem with another person and you want to solve the problem, you can respond in three different ways: passively, aggressively or assertively. [Write aggressive, passive and assertive on board.]
  - a. How do people act when they are aggressive? [Loud voice, close to person, lots of threatening "you" messages.]
  - b. How do people act when they are passive? [Weak or no voice, head down, no eye contact, slumped posture.]
  - c. How do people act when they are assertive? [Firm voice, eye contact, arms length personal space, erect posture, clear "When you \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_, I wish \_\_\_\_\_" messages.]
2. I would like two volunteers to come up so we can see a problem and these three ways of responding to it. Problem: A friend tells an embarrassing story about you at a party.

### (3) Understanding

1. When someone responds aggressively what message are they sending? [I count, you don't count.]
2. When someone responds passively what message do they send? [You count, I don't count.]
3. When someone is assertive, what message do they give? [I count and you count.]
4. Which response shows respect for both yourself and the other person?
5. Is there ever a time when passive behaviour is a good solution to a problem? [Yes, when you say nothing and walk away.]
6. Is there ever a time when you might need to take an aggressive stance? [Yes, when you need to defend or protect yourself.]

#### **(4) Action Steps**

1. I am going to give each group a problem situation where an assertive response is the best choice. I want you to work out a role-play of the situation with an assertive response (see suggested role-plays.)
2. In your Journal Record draw or write about a time when someone did or said something which upset you and then show an assertive response you could make.

## Session 4: Peer Pressure

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### (1) Introduction

Who can remember what we have talked about for the past three sessions? Today we are going to discuss a problem many people your age face... peer pressure... and using our S.T.A.R. four steps for solving problems we'll generate some ways you can deal with it.

### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what peer pressure is?
2. How many of you don't know what peer pressure is?
3. How many of you have ever experienced peer pressure?
4. How many of you have never experienced peer pressure?
5. How many of you think that peer pressure is bad?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is peer pressure?
2. What kinds of things can people your age be pressured about?
3. Can you tell us about a time when you were pressured by friends to do something you didn't want to do or knew you shouldn't do?

### (3) Understanding

1. Is peer pressure good or bad? What can be bad about it? When can it be good? [Friends can encourage you to do things like homework, study for tests, cooperate with teachers, stay away from certain people.]
2. What's so hard about resisting "bad" pressure from a group of friends? [Afraid if you don't go along you will lose friends.]
3. What can you do if a friend tries to pressure you into doing something that you don't want to do? (See S.T.A.R. steps at end of section.)

### (4) Action Steps

1. I am going to give each of your groups a peer pressure role-play and I want you to act it out and use the S.T.A.R. steps to deal with it. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. The S.T.A.R. steps for dealing with peer pressure are written in your Journal Record. I want you to review and illustrate them.

## Session 5: Gang Pressure

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### (1) Introduction

Today is our fifth session in which we are talking about problem solving. Who can remember what problem we talked about during our last session? Today we are going to discuss a problem that you may never have experienced, but you may have heard about it. The topic is gangs and gang pressure.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a gang is?
2. How many of you don't know what a gang is?
3. How many of you think that a person could get pressured into joining a gang?
4. How many of you think that joining a gang would be good?
5. How many of you don't think that joining a gang would be good?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a gang? [A gang is a group of people, generally teenagers or young adults, whose purpose is to provide protection to its members and to engage in unlawful activity.]
2. How can you tell if someone is in a gang? [Distinctive appearance, usually with colours, clothes, hair style.]
3. Have any of you ever seen or known anyone who was in a gang? Can you tell us about it?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons might a person join a gang? [Friendship, a sense of belonging, identity, something to do, excitement, money, protection.]
2. How can people get their needs for things like friendship, identity, excitement, money, etc. met without joining a gang? [Join a club or activity at school or in community. Get a part-time job.]
3. Is it easy or hard to get into a gang? [Easy.]
4. Is it easy or hard to get out of a gang? [Very hard because you know about the gang's illegal activities and could inform the police.]
5. What are the consequences of joining a gang? [Hurt others, cause family problems, drop out of school, close off other opportunities, become injured or killed, go to jail.]
6. If someone wants you to join a gang what can you do? How can you refuse? (See S.T.A.R. steps at end of section.)

### (4) Action Steps

1. I am going to give each group a gang pressure situation and I want you to role play it and demonstrate a way to refuse it. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Illustrate the S.T.A.R. steps for gang pressure in your Journal Record.

## Session 6: Bullying

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### (1) Introduction

Today we are going to discuss another problem that you may have experienced or may in the future need to have some ideas to deal with. The topic is bullying.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you know what a bully is?
2. How many of you don't know what a bully is?
3. How many of you have been bullied?
4. How many of you have never been bullied?
5. How many of you have bullied someone else?

### (2) Exploration

1. What is a bully? [A person who constantly harasses other people, either physically or psychologically.]
2. What kinds of things do bullies do? [Threaten, taunt, physically assault, name call, put down, shun or ostracize, spread rumours, slander.]
3. Can you tell us about a time when someone bullied you? How did you feel? What did you do?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do people bully others? [Maybe someone is bullying them; only way they know to feel powerful.]
2. What are the most common impulses that people have when they are bullied? [Run and hide, be passive, be a victim OR strike back, fight, be aggressive.]
3. Is being passive a good choice if you are bullied? Why or why not?
4. Is being aggressive a good choice if you are bullied? Why or why not?
5. What can you do if you are being bullied? What choices do you have? (See S.T.A.R. steps at end of theme.)

### (4) Action Steps

1. I am going to give each of your groups a "bullying" type situation. I want you to decide how to role-play it and show the way you agree to deal with it. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Review and illustrate the S.T.A.R. Steps for Bullying in your Journal Record.

## Session 7: Avoiding a Fight

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### (1) Introduction

Today is our last discussion session in this Violence Prevention Programme we have been working on for the past \_\_\_\_ weeks and we are going to talk about avoiding a fight. For our next session — the last one — I will be asking you to complete an evaluation of the programme for me. Let's take a minute, before we start, to review what we have done. This programme has three main sections/units/themes. What was the first one?... the second one?... this last one? Let's get started on today's session.

#### Warm-up Questions

1. How many of you have ever been in a fight with someone else?
2. How many of you have never been in a fight?
3. How many of you like fighting with others?
4. How many of you don't like fighting?

### (2) Exploration

1. In what places do fights happen?
2. Can anyone tell us about a time when you saw a fight? How did it get started? What happened after that? How did it end? How did you feel while you watched the fight?
3. Can anyone tell us about a fight you were in? How did it get started? What happened next? How did it end? How did you feel before... during... and after the fight?

### (3) Understanding

1. For what reasons do people challenge a person to fight or respond to the challenge? [To save face.]
2. For what reasons do people watch fights?
3. What is the best way to stop a fight that you see? [Walk away and ignore it.]
4. For what reason do young people usually stop fighting if everyone walks away? [No point fighting if you don't have an audience.]
5. What's hard about walking away from a challenge to fight?
6. Is fighting a good way to solve problems? Why or why not?
7. Is avoiding a fight a sign of strength or weakness?
8. What can you do in angry situations that save face but don't involve fighting or running away? Let's make some S.T.A.R. Steps. (See S.T.A.R. Steps at end of theme.)

### (4) Action Steps

1. Let's work out some role-plays in your groups to demonstrate how you can avoid a fight. (See suggested role-plays.)
2. Review and illustrate the S.T.A.R. Steps for avoiding a fight.



# **S.T.A.R. Steps and Suggested Role-Plays**

## **Problem Solving and Solutions to Specific Problems**

### **Session 1: The Steps**

#### **S.T.A.R. Four Steps for Solving Problems**

1. Stop and Calm Down
2. Think:
  - What is the problem?  
What happened?  
How do I feel?  
How do others feel?  
What do I need?
  - What are my choices?  
Brainstorm
  - Which is the best choice right now?  
Is it safe?  
Is it fair?
3. Act: Do your best choice.
4. Review: How did it work?  
  
Reward Yourself.

## Session 2: Finding Solutions

### Suggested role-plays

- a. You forgot your money for a field trip.
- b. You broke a window at a neighbour's house.
- c. You lost something that you borrowed from a friend.
- d. You feel your parents were unfair because they wouldn't let you go to a movie with a friend.
- e. A friend usually chooses what the two of you will do.

## Session 3: Assertiveness

### Suggested role-plays

- a. Someone cuts in line ahead of you.
- b. A friend decides what you will do on Friday night without asking your opinion.
- c. A friend borrows your favourite jacket and doesn't return it.
- d. You think that your parents require you to do more housework than your brother/sister.
- e. A friend is nice to you when you are alone but acts cold to you when he/she is with others.
- f. Someone who you don't care for very much calls you every night and takes up all your time at school.
- g. A brother or sister borrows your things without asking.
- h. A friend grabs a photograph away as you are showing it to another friend.
- i. A classmate keeps stepping on the heels of your shoes.
- j. You think a friend spends a lot of time at your house in order to use your possessions.

## Session 4: Peer Pressure

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down
2. Think:
  - What are the possible consequences of doing this?  
Someone may get hurt.  
May get in trouble at school, with parents, with police.
3. Act: Say
  - I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - AND I don't want you to do it either because I care about you and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - AND let's do something else / go to my house and watch a video.
4. Reward Yourself.

### Suggested role-plays

- a. Your friends are teasing a younger student and they want you to go along with them.
- b. Your friends want you to skip school and go to the mall with them.
- c. A friend wants you to steal a classmate's hat.
- d. A friend wants you to help him/her cheat on a test.
- e. A friend wants you to help him/her gang up on another student.
- f. A friend wants you to drink some of her/his parents' beer/liquor.
- g. A friend wants you to take some drugs at a party.

## Session 5: Gang Pressure

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down
2. Think:
  - What are they/or a person asking me to do?
  - What are the consequences?
3. Act:  
State your decision: Keep it simple.  
"No, I don't want to do it."
4. Reward Yourself.

### Suggested role-plays

- a. Some kids threaten to beat you up if you don't join their gang.
- b. Some kids in your neighbourhood pressure you to wear some gang "colours."
- c. A gang promises to protect you from some kids who have been bullying you.
- d. Your best friend says he or she wants to join a gang and wants you to join also.
- e. Some friends invite you to join a neighbourhood club but you have to steal something to join.
- f. Some friends in your neighbourhood want you to help them spray their gang sign on some walls.

## Session 6: Bullying

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down
2. Think: What are my choices here?
  - Ignore (don't respond emotionally to the teasing, etc.).
  - Give a reason for the person to stop.  
Example: Stop or I'll tell my teacher, the principal, my dad, my mom.
  - Leave and get help from an adult.
3. Act: Do the best choice.
4. Reward yourself.

### Suggested role-plays

- a. A student won't let you pass in the hall.
- b. An older student crowds in line ahead of you.
- c. A neighbourhood bully yells insults at you every day when you walk home.
- d. A student tells you to move to another table at lunch because he/she and his/her friends want to eat there.
- e. Someone tells you they want to "borrow" your new jacket.
- f. A student tells you to give your homework to her/him.
- g. Someone tells you to move out of the way.
- h. A student wants you to pay him or her money to protect you.
- i. Someone calls you a racial name.
- j. A student makes a joke about you as you pass by.

## Session 7: Avoiding a Fight

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down
2. Think: What are my choices here?
  - Talk to the person in an assertive friendly way. You can:
    - Set the record straight: "I'm not trying to take anything away from you."
    - Agree on a point: "I really am a jerk sometimes."
    - Show understanding: "I can understand why you're upset. It doesn't seem right/fair, does it?"
    - Suggest an alternative: "I think we're both pretty tough. How about arm wrestling?"
    - Suggest asking someone else for help in solving the problem: "Let's ask (teacher, parent, friend, coach, counsellor) \_\_\_\_\_ if they can help us solve this problem."
    - Suggest talking later: "Let's talk this over after school/tomorrow when we've both calmed down."
  - Walk or move away (out of reach) for now.
3. Act: Do the choice.
4. Reward yourself.

### Suggested role-plays

- a. A student thinks you stole something of his/hers.
- b. Someone crashes your party and wants to fight when you ask her/him to leave.
- c. An acquaintance takes a compliment from you as a put-down.
- d. Someone wants to fight with you to prove himself/herself to his/her friends
- e. A student accuses you of spreading rumours about him/her.
- f. A student wants to fight because you accidentally bumped into her/him.
- g. A student challenges you to a fight because you were talking to his girlfriend or her boyfriend.
- h. Someone thinks you called him/her an insulting name.

# Student Evaluation

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Name:

Date:

Grade:

## Violence Prevention Programme

1. This programme was divided into three parts. Check the part that you thought was the most important.

- ☐ Empathy: Understanding and Communicating Emotions/Feelings.
- ☐ Anger Control.
- ☐ Problem Solving and Solutions to Specific Problems.

2. What did you like the best about this programme?

3. What didn't you like about the programme?

4. What ideas do you have for improving this programme?

5. Write down all the things that you learned from participating in this programme. You can write on the back of the page if you run out of space.

# The Violence Prevention Programme

## **My Keepsake Journal Record**

Name: .....

Facilitator/Teacher:

Grade:

Division:

Date:



# **The Problem**

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## **Session 1: Violence**

- Write your ideas about the reasons a person your age should think and talk about violence.

## **Session 2: The Dynamics of Violence**

- Write what you learned from watching the film "Balablok" and discussing it.

# Empathy: Understanding and Communicating Emotions

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## Session 1: Knowing and Expressing Your Feelings

- I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.
- I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.
- I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.

## Session 2: Recognizing and Showing Understanding of Another's Feelings

- Draw or write about a time when you showed understanding of another person's feelings.

## Session 3: Communicating Empathy

- Write the ways that you express or communicate empathy to your classmate and members of your family.

## Session 4: Stereotyping, Labelling and Prejudice

- Write down the things that you can do to prevent prejudice and stereotyping of others.

# Anger Control

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## Session 1: Exploring Anger

- Draw a picture of, or write about, the angriest time in your life.

## Session 2: Understanding Anger

- Write some ways that you can calm your body and your mind down when you get angry.

## Session 3: Managing Anger

### Four Steps for Controlling Anger

1. Stop and Calm Down
  - Calm down your body (take deep breaths or count backwards) and your mind (talk to yourself).
2. Think
  - What choice should I make? Stay, walk away or ignore it.
3. Talk
  - To the person you are angry at ("When you \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. I wish \_\_\_\_\_.") or someone you trust.
4. Feel Good Again
  - Do something you enjoy that is relaxing.

## Session 4: Anger Control Summary

- Create a bumper sticker with a catchy phrase to show what you have learned about controlling anger.

# Problem Solving and Solutions to Specific Problems

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## Session 1: The Steps

S.T.A.R. Four Steps for Solving Problems.

1. Stop and Calm Down.
2. Think:
  - What is the problem?
  - What are my choices?
  - Which is the best choice right now?
    - Is it safe?
    - Is it fair?
3. Act: Do your best choice.
4. Review: How did it work?

Reward Yourself.

## Session 2: Finding Solutions

Problem

"Best Choice" Solution

## Session 3: Assertiveness

Problem

Assertive Response

## Session 4: Peer Pressure

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down.
2. Think: What are the possible consequences of doing this?
3. Act: say:  
"I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."  
"I don't want you to do it either because I care about you and \_\_\_\_\_."  
"Let's do something else."
4. Reward yourself.

## Session 5: Gang Pressure

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down.
2. Think:
  - What are they asking me to do?
  - What are the consequences?
3. Act:  
State your decision. Keep it simple.  
"No, I don't want to do it."
4. Reward yourself.

## Session 6: Bullying

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down.
2. Think:
  - What are my choices here?
  - Ignore. Don't say or do anything. Don't get upset.
  - Give a reason for the person to stop.  
"Stop or I'll tell \_\_\_\_\_."
  - Leave and get help from an adult.
3. Act: do the best choice.
4. Reward yourself.

## Session 7: Avoiding a Fight

### S.T.A.R. Steps

1. Stop and Calm Down.
2. Think: What are my choices here?
  - Talk in an assertive, friendly way.
    - "I'm not trying to take anything from you."
    - "I think we're both pretty tough. Let's try arm wrestling."
    - "Let's ask \_\_\_\_\_ if they can help us."
    - "Let's talk this over later."
  - Walk or move away (out of reach) for now.
3. Act: do the choice.
4. Reward yourself.

## VII Parent Presentation: Media Violence and Children

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### 1. Introduction

- Recently I attended a workshop on Media Violence and Children and I thought that you might find some of the things that I learned interesting.

### 2. Activity

- Let's start with an activity. I would like you to find a partner (three is fine) and a piece of paper and:
  - a) Write down the types of media (radio, T.V., stereo, etc.) that you had in your home when you were in elementary school (ages 5-12).
  - b) Write down the media you have in your home now.

### 3. Media in the 1990s

Not only do we have more media sources today but in the past 10 years there have been a number of changes in the content of the media. Let's look at some of these changes. (Put the following information on an overhead.)

#### *Changes in the media in the past ten years*

- a) Home entertainment phenomenon
  - increased accessibility
  - lower costs — video movies — introduced in 1983  
accepted in 1987  
cheaper to rent than to buy a book  
or magazine  
VCR — biggest selling consumer  
item
- b) Content of television material
  - increased violence and brutality
  - fantasy violence
  - "ultra realism" (current wars)

- c) U.S. deregulation of children's T.V. (1983)
  - Entertainment as advertisement, e.g. Ninja Turtles, Power Rangers
  - T.V. programme is essentially a marketing plan to sell children's products.
  - Programmes use lots of action to keep the children glued to the T.V. until the advertisements.
- d) Convergence of content with technologies.
  - Blending of film, T.V., video, toys, video games, print. Example: Jurassic Park
- e) Exponential growth of video game sales (in the last 10 years)

#### 4. Activity

- Find your partner and paper again. This time I want you to think about the scariest thing that you ever saw in a movie or on T.V. Think about: where you were, who was with you, if you ever told anybody how you feel when you remember it.
- Today because of the media changes children can be exposed to many more sources of violence and thus more scary images.
- Parents need to remember that:
  - a) a child is a child and **NOT** a little adult. Children have the language but not the cognitive development to distinguish reality from unreality.
  - b) The video images we see have incredible power — they are with us for life. They are different from print images (books, stories) where you make your own images.
  - c) As adults we are all to a certain extent desensitized — we have to be to survive — but children are still sensitive. They do not have the protection that we have built up with experience.
  - d) If children are exposed to excessive amounts of violence, they become emotionally numb toward people, their feelings are blunted.



**5. We now have some research results of the effect of media violence on children**

- Desensitization to acts of violence in real life.
- Imitation of violent and anti-social behaviour.
- Increased anxiety about violence in "real" life.

**6. Violence as portrayed in media vs. daily life**

- Much higher incidence.
- Witnessed by many more people.
- Focus on acts (which are fast) rather than the consequences of the acts.

**7. Lastly I want to mention six things that parents can do to prevent this negative impact (Put the following information on an overhead).**

## Media Proofing Your Children

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1. Keep a positive connection with your children. Children with a positive connection with one adult tend not to be negatively affected by media violence. (We know this from studies of children who are victims of violence. Healing comes through positive connections.)
2. Teach children that violence is wrong and illegal. Have zero tolerance for violent solutions to problems between children.
3. Build your children's resources/self esteem/self confidence. Violence is the resort of the resourceless. Help them learn what they need to learn to become successful adults.
4. Restrict the viewing of adult videos and T.V. shows. The age restrictions imposed at the movie theatres should be adhered to at home. (Shows like Nightmare on Elm Street — which takes place in a home — are very frightening for children.)
5. Movies, like Jurassic Park, reality-based T.V. shows (Top Cops) and even news shows should be carefully monitored by adults and only watched by children in the presence of an adult who can give explanations and comfort to the child.
6. If a T.V. show or video/game seems to be negatively affecting your child, don't let him/her watch it.

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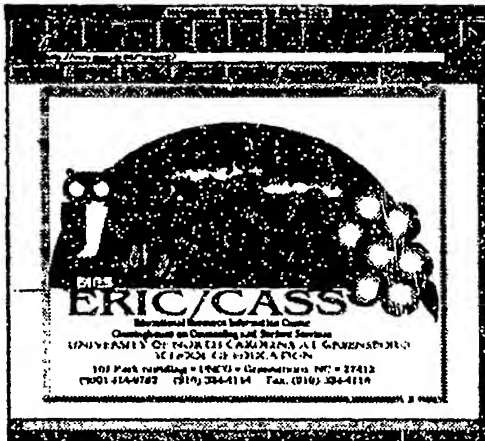
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# *Violence* Prevention

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